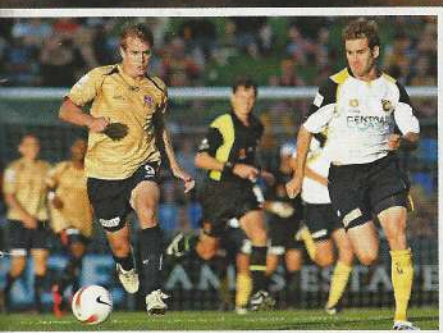


# AUSTRALIAN Football WEEKLY

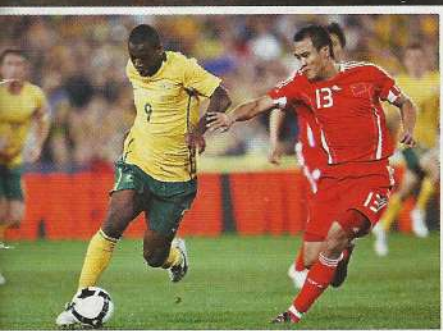
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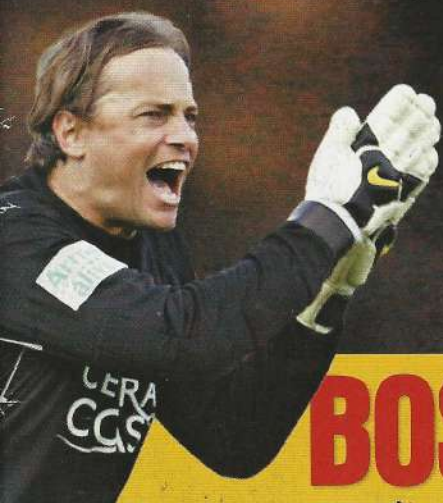
Issue One  
Sept 11-17 2008



**WE NEED TO FIRE UP!**  
Griffiths delivers Jets warning



**DOING IT TOUGH**  
Bruce Djite opens up on  
new European challenge



**WE'LL BEAT  
ANYONE  
ANY TIME!**

**MUSCAT GIVES NOD TO  
VICTORY'S NEW CLASS**

**BOSNICH!** Aussie legend tells how Central  
Coast Mariners saved his career







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## David Hall: From the Editor

# ALL ABOUT FOOTBALL

**WHAT'S** your dream job? Does it have something to do with sitting around talking about, writing about, watching and researching your lifelong obsession and fascination?

Not many of us can be that lucky, but somehow I lucked out.

There's never been a better time to get into football in Australia. The game is booming all over the country. Kids are playing it, women are playing it, blokes who never thought they'd get into "soccer" are finally seeing the round-ball code as a proper sport.

There are many reasons for this, but a key one is the manner in which fans have got behind the Hyundai A-League from day one. Granted, the competition is not perfect – but then again, that's why we love football.

The A-League has given Aussie fans the chance to take ownership of the sport like never before. And that's where we come in.

Our aim is to give you something you can't get anywhere else. The sport is open

to anyone who wants to get involved and so is *Australian Football Weekly*.

This magazine is really just evolution. As more people follow the game, it's only natural they should have a dedicated magazine that delivers news, features, intelligent comment and considered analysis from some of the best and brightest in the Australian game.

And that's vital. We love football from all over the world – but this is a magazine for you, Australian football fans, and it will have a uniquely Australian voice.

We will focus on Aussie teams, on Aussie players and Aussie fans. It's about giving the millions of committed, dedicated football fans out there

a magazine they deserve. It's written by football fans, for football fans.

Sounds like pie in the sky? Maybe... but it's about time somebody had a crack at it and we're up to the challenge.

Let us know what you love and hate; tell us why you play the game. Talk about football. It's why we're all here.



**“The A-League has given fans the chance to take ownership of the sport like never before – even blokes who thought they'd never get into “soccer”.**”

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Jets super striker (right) demands more from team





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# KICK OFF

Thompson signs two-year extension ■ Coyne wary of Roar ■ Gold Coast to unite fans ■ Diego on his way back



**IN BIG NEWS** for both Melbourne Victory and the Hyundai A-League, star striker Archie Thompson has extended his contract as the club's marquee player for a further two years.

Thompson, 29, who holds the record for most goals in the A-League with 30 from 58 appearances, including five in the grand final against Adelaide in 2007, has now signed on until the end of the 2010/11 season.

Speaking ahead of Victory's clash this weekend against Adelaide, Thompson said, "I just love the club. I've been here since day one. I enjoy Melbourne, my wife loves Melbourne. My kids are settled here. The team and the supporters, I just love. I think we've got a great side, and I want to be a part of the future going forward."

"It's a fantastic result for both Archie and Melbourne Victory and for our fans and supporters," says Victory Football Operations Manager Gary Cole. "It was a great coup for Melbourne Victory when we signed Archie to get him back from Europe and it's a great coup now. He's been a fantastic asset for our football club and for the A-League in general, as well as the Socceroos."

Thompson will be 32 when the deal finishes, but says he isn't interested in a longer-term deal. "I'm sure I've got plenty of good years left in me," he says. "It's not always about the money. I'm just happy to be part of the set-up. I like to think it's one of the best clubs in Australia. I just want to win championships and I think this is a club that can do it."

Coach Ernie Merrick said Thompson was a vital part of his on-field plans and it was very much a positive to have his three-man striker force secured beyond the current season.

"It's just great to have signed up Danny Allsopp, Archie and Ney Fabiano for the long-term. Danny and Archie are the two highest goalscorers of all time in the league. So, from a coach's perspective, it's pretty much ideal," Merrick says.

The dynamic striker also holds the world record for most goals in an international match, when he netted 13 times against American Samoa in 2001 and will now lead Melbourne Victory into its new home at Melbourne Rectangular Stadium, which is due to open late next year.

## COYNE'S READY FOR ROAR

**FOR PERTH GLORY** captain Jamie Coyne (below), he's hoping his side's luck is about to change... against Queensland Roar. "They're a team we've struggled to beat in the past," he explains. "They're an energetic side, but they're not doing as well as they hoped either and with us being at home, we'll be looking to dominate them."

"It'll be quite an entertaining match."



## TURNING BACK THE HANDS OF TIME

**WHEN A RESULT'S** etched in to the history archives, there's no removing it. But, for Melbourne Victory captain Kevin Muscat, he sees it as a source of motivation for their opponents this weekend, Adelaide United. He realises a result the magnitude of the 6-0 defeat Adelaide suffered at the hands of Melbourne in the 2007 grand final will always spur them on.

"We've had some great battles against Adelaide," Muscat explains. "Without doubt they'll still have that day at Telstra Dome etched in their memories and they'll want to get a result to remove that from their memories."

"But that was a long time ago and, for us, certainly, we've forgotten about it and moved on, but it'll always be there in history."

## DIEGO'S BACK IN THE GROOVE

**ADELAIDE UNITED WILL** be boosted by the return of playmaker Diego, who's in contention for the match against Melbourne Victory. It's good news for Adelaide, as they approach a busy September schedule, which sees them come up against Melbourne and Sydney, as well as Japanese champions Kashima Antlers in the AFC Champions League.

## SMALL TALK

● Mark Bosnich's last competitive game, before his recent debut for Mariners, was against Everton at Goodison Park on December 18, 2001. He kept a clean sheet that day as his then club Chelsea got a 0-0 draw. ● Charlie Miller is the first player in Hyundai A-League history to score in his opening three games. ● Newcastle will be hoping they don't start the same results sequence as they did the last time they lost 5-0. The Jets lost 5-0 to Queensland in round 20, season 1, which began a winless run of 11 games.



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Having missed Adelaide's first three games, Diego (left) has been under an intense training regime to get himself match fit.

"It has been about a month, but everything is going well," he says of his recent regimen. "I'm training with the group and will hopefully be

included to play Melbourne.

"It has been a hard week, doing two sessions a day every day, so I'm just trying to get through it."

## OKON HITS GOLD

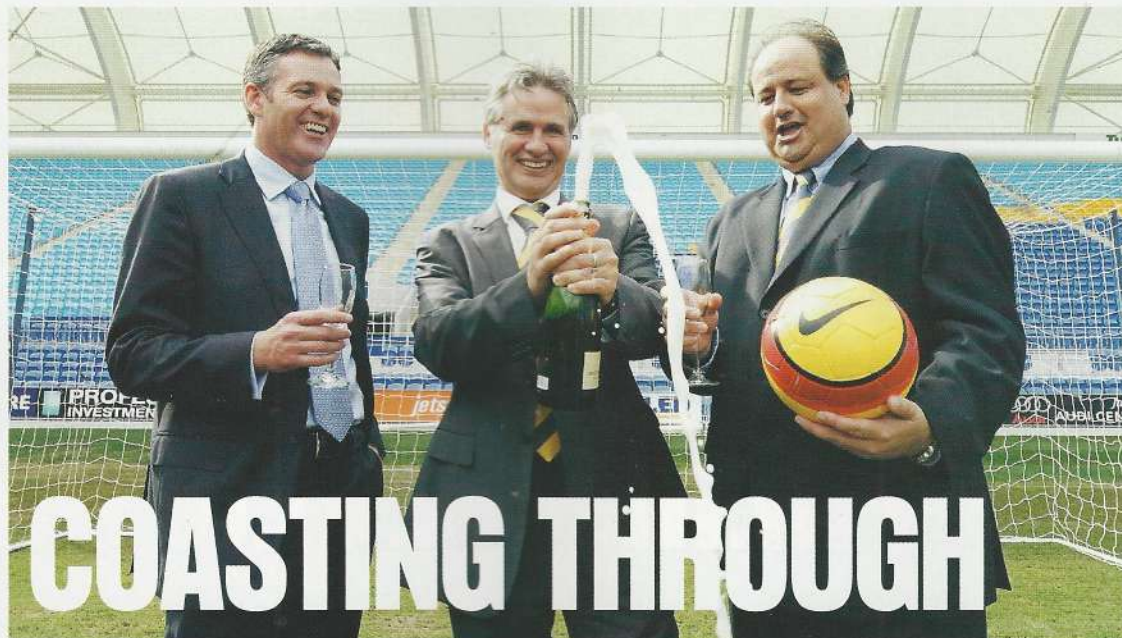
**HOT ON THE** heels of the announcement of Gold Coast United, the team's been quick to secure the services of experienced ex-Socceroo Paul Okon as assistant coach to Miron Bleiberg. "I'm really looking forward to it and Gold Coast, as a place, deserves to have a football team and a football team that's successful," Okon tells *AFW*.

"It's my first opportunity to get into coaching and it's come earlier than I thought, but having played overseas and played under many managers I can pass my experience on to the younger lads in the team."

And speaking of former coaches, Okon singles one out for particular praise: former Socceroo coach Terry Venables. "He was the stand out," Okon says. "I remember that when I played under him I thought to myself that when I get into coaching I'd do many things the way he did – his man management was really good."

But when Gold Coast United kicks-off its future at the start of the next season, Okon will be standing beside coach Miron Bleiberg, and it's an opportunity he's relishing. "Miron is very colourful, but he's very professional too – he wants to play attacking football, but we have to find balance because results are also important."

Plus there's an ominous warning to the rest of the Hyundai A-League ahead of Gold Coast's maiden season in 2009/10. "We want Skilled Park to be a place where away teams don't come away with anything," Okon warns their soon-to-be challengers.



# COASTING THROUGH

**N**EXT YEAR SEES the birth of a new club, Gold Coast United, as one half of the exciting A-League expansion. On the back of this news, we spoke to Gold Coast United CEO Clive Mensink (above right) about his vision on this new chapter.

## You must be really excited about Gold Coast United?

Yes, very excited. We've been hanging on the approval for a couple of months now, and it was just good to get the nod last week.

## How much will an A-League team mean to the Gold Coast?

It's going to mean a lot, especially to the kids. It's giving them a pathway for their future and that's something we want to establish and get going in the schools and the junior clubs. We also want to provide good coaching and information to those coaches who are in the programmes.

## How difficult will it be competing with the other codes in the Gold Coast? Is it much of an issue?

At the end of the day, we're happy to compete against anyone, regardless. The other codes don't really give us a serious problem; there's a certain fan that comes to football, just like there's a certain fan that goes to rugby league – I just hope they'll both support the Gold Coast A-League club.

## Is the announcement of the Gold Coast team a positive sign of where the A-League is heading?

I hope so. I'm very supportive of the expansion the FFA is doing. Obviously, you do want to expand a good product, but you've also got to be careful not to expand it too soon. While I accept there's an expansion program in place, I hope it's constantly reviewed and it's not expanding for the sake of expanding. We want to maintain a good product.

## And Skilled Park will be a good venue for A-League matches...

Skilled Park is a terrific venue for football – it's terrific for whatever sport is played there. You're right on top of the game and the atmosphere seems to be kept in the stadium.

## How do you think coach Miron Bleiberg will go?

The Bleiberg direction will be very good, he's got a wealth of experience – we've been having a few late night chats...

## Animated ones?

Never animated. We're just good football fans. You can interpret that the way you want [laughs] – Miron and I are very similar in the way we're thinking, in regards to the criteria we're looking for in certain players, or the type of players we want to represent the Gold Coast.

## What sort of players are you looking for?

We definitely need players who will be ambassadors and to represent the club and the region. Players who will interact well with the community and players who will maintain 100 per cent professionalism when they're on the pitch... as well as off it.

## Of course. Speaking of which, have you compiled a list of potential marquee signings?

We're reviewing it as we go – it's ongoing until we get permission to contact players.

## What timeframe are you looking at to assemble the squad?

Pre-season starts about Apr 1, so we would like to have 80 per cent – if not more than that – penned up by that stage.

## What's it going to mean to you when the first match gets underway at Gold Coast United?

It's going to be very surreal, we hope we can do the right thing by the Gold Coast public and put on a show they'll be proud of.

## Have you started dreaming about holding the A-League trophy in 2010?

Well, we're going out there to win it – I don't think there's any question about that. The only reason we're putting the team out there is to win, we don't want to go out there and be stuffed pillows for people. The idea is that whoever puts on a shirt will always give 100 per cent.

## SMALL TALK

● The Socceroos win against Holland in Eindhoven was Australia's best ever away win according to FIFA rankings, as Holland are ranked 4th in the world. Our previous best away win was against the 8th-ranked England in February 2003. ● Adelaide United are about to start a nightmare schedule: they play Melbourne this Friday in Melbourne, then travel to Japan to play Kashima Antlers next Wednesday. They follow that by playing Sydney in Sydney on the Saturday and the return leg against Kashima back in Adelaide on Wednesday.



## HYUNDAI A-LEAGUE FIXTURES, ROUND 4

Friday 12 September 2008	Sunday 14 September 2008
Melbourne Victory FC	Perth Glory FC
Adelaide United FC	Queensland Roar FC
8.00 PM	3.00 PM
Telstra Dome, Melbourne	Members Equity Stadium, Perth

Saturday 13 September 2008	Sunday 14 September 2008
Newcastle Jets FC	Wellington Phoenix FC
Sydney FC	Central Coast Mariners FC
7.00 PM	5.00 PM
EnergyAustralia Stadium, Newcastle	Westpac Stadium, Wellington

## HYUNDAI A-LEAGUE LADDER ROUND 3

	TEAM	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	PTS
1	Melbourne Victory FC	3	2	1	0	9	2	7	7
2	Sydney FC	3	2	1	0	8	4	4	7
3	Adelaide United FC	3	2	1	0	5	1	4	7
4	Central Coast Mariners FC	3	1	1	1	7	6	1	4
5	Queensland Roar FC	3	0	2	1	4	6	-2	2
6	Newcastle Jets FC	3	0	2	1	4	9	-5	2
7	Perth Glory FC	3	0	1	2	5	9	-4	1
8	Wellington Phoenix FC	3	0	1	2	3	8	-5	1

VENUE	GAMES	WON	DREW	LOST	WON %	FOR	AGAINST
Members Equity Stadium	5	4	0	1	80.0%	11	5
EnergyAustralia Stadium	6	3	2	1	50.0%	13	7
Bluetongue Stadium	4	2	2	0	50.0%	6	4
Olympic Park/Telstra Dome	4	2	0	2	50.0%	4	7
Hindmarsh Stadium	5	2	1	2	40.0%	4	6
Suncorp Stadium	35	10	12	13	28.6%	41	39
North Harbour/Westpac Stadium	5	1	2	2	20.0%	5	6
Sydney Football Stadium	5	0	3	2	0.0%	1	5
<b>Totals</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>34.8%</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>79</b>

## HOT SHOTS

THE start to the Hyundai A-League season 2008-09 has been perfect for the neutral – and Melbourne Victory fans. The opening three rounds have plenty of produced goals. This is how the first three rounds of goals compare to the previous three seasons: season one: 25; season two: 30; season three 22; and season four: 45

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**Dream striker:** Is Matt Simon your fantasy team (right)?



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**PAUL TRIMBOLI: IN THE CUT**

# LOCAL CLASS

You don't have to look too far for moments of quality in football; **PAUL TRIMBOLI** proves the A-League has what it takes to entertain

**"MOMENTS OF GENUINE** quality..." The English Premier League, the Serie A or Primera Liga? I hear the debate often and have heard good arguments for all sides. I follow all three and enjoy the weekly dose of highlights. I love those memorable moments in the games, the moments of genuine quality that get me off my seat. Lately I have found that those moments are not just confined to the big three...

## Deco v Cole

Away at Wigan – Deco, the Portuguese conjuror, in his second Premier League start for Chelsea, produces a sublime moment of skill. He lifts the ball over the defensive wall, deceiving Mike Pollitt in the Latics goal to score what proves to be the winner.

On the same weekend Shannon Cole (right) was also on his second start, but for Sydney FC against Central Coast. He shows poise beyond his CV to also decide a game – a clever touch from the set piece is so inch perfect that the ball clips the post on its way past a flailing Vukovic. You would be hard pressed to argue his celebratory tumble run isn't equally as impressive!

## Ronaldinho v Amaral

The San Siro in bright sunshine reveals a home debut for a Brazilian with a point to prove. Late in the first half, with Milan trailing Bologna 0-1, Ronny drifts into the outside left position and takes possession. He puts an opponent off balance as he checks back on to his right foot. Then, off one step, he delivers a curling ball into that teasing area just outside the six-yard box. It hangs in the air invitingly for Ambrosini, who times his run and leap to perfection to head past Antonioli for a welcome equaliser.

In a different time zone far away, another Brazilian is at his Perth home debut, and looking to impress.

Amaral, too, finds his team a goal down, when he decides to push forward from his more accustomed holding midfield role.

Bulloch's interchange with Trinidad splits

Newcastle's rear guard, and from deep in the right corner Amaral volleys a tantalising, curving cross that is met by the rampaging Dadi, who climbs high to power a header past Covic.

## Arsenal v Adelaide

Arsenal, so often the masters when it comes to intricate attacking play in the attacking third, turned it on against Newcastle United at the Emirates.

They carved their opposition open over and over with their awareness, movement and willingness to share the football.

Already a goal up, Adebayor surged into the box and returned the ball to Eboué, who with the goal in sight kept his composure to back heel into the path of

the late arriving Van Persie. He in turn crashed the ball past a helpless Shay Given.

Rewind to Hindmarsh Stadium and rampant United are tormenting Wellington Phoenix.

A sweeping 70-yard attack results in Reid collecting a short pass from Cristiano, 30 yards from goal. He eliminates five Phoenix opponents with an exquisite through ball played with the outside of his right boot.

The precise pass releases Pantelis who has run hard from inside his own half. Calm and collected, he steadies before slipping the football back across the face of

goal to an appreciative Cristiano, who steers home the unmissable.

This is a beautiful game at its finest and these are the moments that have the fans on their feet.

It is true we have a growing competition and there will be a lot more improvement, but I tell you what, when it comes to 'moments of genuine quality', the A-League stacks up with the best of them...



**It's true we have a growing competition but for 'moments of quality' the A-League is with the best of them.**



## GLORY ADD MIDFIELD STRENGTH

**PERTH GLORY** HAVE added strength and resolve their squad with the signing of Queenslander Wayne Srhoj on a one-year deal.

Srhoj, a 26-year-old defensive midfielder, has spent the past four years in Romania and had already played for Glory in the NSL.

"It's been a while since I last played in Australia and I'm really looking forward to putting the Glory shirt back on and getting out there with the boys," Srhoj says.

Having been training with Perth for the past two weeks, Srhoj is already pressing for a start in an upcoming A-League match for Glory.

"I'm feeling fitter with every session and I'll continue to work overtime to show the coach I'm ready to go," he says. "When I was last here Perth Glory was the standout team in Australian football and I see no reason why they can't be again."

Coach Dave Mitchell has identified the reasons for Srhoj's signing. "Wayne is an accomplished player who is technically very good and has excellent passing range.

"He is a great addition and he'll be very important for us throughout the campaign."

## MARINERS HIT WITH ELRICH INJURY

**THE NEWS** OF key midfielder Ahmad Elrich's season-ending injury has rocked the Mariners' camp just three games in.

The knee injury was sustained against Queensland Roar in round three, but although a big loss for the team, coach Lawrie McKinna remains calm. "It's never good getting injuries, especially so early in the season," he says. "But we've got a lot of talent in the squad. We'll keep our options open but we've got good depth in the squad which is proving important."



## SYDNEY'S TIMPANO HIT FOR SIX

Sydney FC defender Jacob Timpano has been ruled out for up to six weeks after undergoing minor surgery to remove a bone spur from his ankle.

The news comes after the 22-year-old sat out most of the past two seasons with injuries, but had made an encouraging start to this season. Timpano remains upbeat, however.

"Including all the pre-season games, I've started nine matches and haven't missed a beat with any form of injury," he says. "This is just a little setback and everything else is positive."

Coach John Kosmina praised Timpano's attitude and is looking forward to seeing him back in the side soon. "Jake's shown plenty of character at a time when he was eneded by the team," Kosmina says.



## CHALKBOARD

ANDY HARPER

## Australia v Holland

How Holman and Kennedy can solve the goal-drought

**AS EACH SOCCEROOS** squad is announced, the same questions seemed to be raised. One of these is what to do without Mark Viduka? On Saturday in Eindhoven, we saw perhaps the best answer to that question yet to be offered; Josh Kennedy and Brett Holman.

First to Josh Kennedy. The beanpole Albury-Woodongian doesn't provide the threat, or security in possession, at ground level as Viduka does, but he is a better aerial target and with a better goal yield from that department already. If the team can arrange its affairs to service this advantage, consistently, then goals will come.

Many speculated that Scott McDonald would slip-in adjacent to Kennedy where the two would complement each other nicely. It hasn't really happened that way yet. McDonald is a poacher more than he is a prompter and part of Kennedy's impact has to take effect further away from the penalty area rather than merely receiving high balls amongst a phalanx of desperate defenders.

So then, to Brett Holman, who's been able to find his feet from the elongated opportunity afforded him. Finally, in Eindhoven, he showed that, post-Viduka, he and Kennedy can provide an alternative, together. Holman offers variety and mobility. Where Kennedy attracted the attention of Holland's central defenders, Holman was able, more so than previously, to slip away from the line and glide into space to receive the ball or to attack the vacancy. There was subtlety in his offerings if not composure in the finishing. As a youngster Holman scored plenty of goals. If he can use Eindhoven as a platform whilst rediscovering his inner-child, the result could be very exciting for the national team.

Whilst it's not yet a case of "thanks but we'll be right from here Dukes", this was the closest the Socceroos have come to a potential long-term, sustainable answer for Australia up-front.



## DAVID LOWE: THE LOWE DOWN

## NUMBERS GAME



Are stats just a bunch of digits with little or no relevance in the game?

**DAVID LOWE** attempts to make sense of the conundrum

**I'M RELIABLY INFORMED** that someone of greater renown than Simon Hill first uttered the phrase, "There are lies, damned lies and statistics." But when the Fox Sports commentator reached for that quote during a recent Hyundai A-League match, it planted a seed in my head.

When my belated request for a media pass was expediently processed by the FFA, I was delighted to receive a copy of the official guide to season 2008/09, and the seed was fertilised further.

There is that much juicy information to digest, I'm picturing accountants, statisticians and football nuts sneaking secretive glances at the contents in their lunch hours, while the newsagent concentrates on the pimply teenagers near the girly magazines.

But what do all the statistics mean? Are they relevant? Can we improve their functionality?

The first stat to jump out at me was that of Mile Jedinak making 104 effective tackles in season three of the A-League.

That's a daunting thought for someone like me, whose lifetime tally, including school games and training sessions, wouldn't remotely approach three figures. In fact, I've just retrospectively demoted myself from "former ball player" to "ex-fanny merchant", on the grounds of neglect of defensive duties.

But what is an effective tackle? Is it purely the dispossession of an opponent? Should we grade the tackle? Say one point for dispossession, two points for possession going to your side. Should a last ditch tackle to prevent a scoring opportunity be worth more than a 50-50 tackle on the sideline near halfway?

In the less cultured days of yesteryear, I'm sure some of my teammates would have insisted on three points for a tackle that won possession and hurt the opponent, and up to five points if the opponent received medical treatment or had to be substituted.

In a lot of ways the stats are like the AFL, in that the number of involvements and possessions are valued on a higher level than the end product.

Although, in a stellar season such as the one Joel Griffiths just enjoyed, heavy stats like top two finishes in categories including most fouls won and conceded;

most offside; and most shots, and shots on target; were backed up by the end product, in a season high 14 goals.

But perhaps the stats that baffle me the most are the ones for passing and assists.

I just can't comprehend how a safety-first negative pass of say five metres, can have the same value in a statistical sense as a perfectly timed defence-splitting pass.

To me, this is the same principle as my belief that assists should be awarded for the creation of clear scoring opportunities, without relying on another player to score, before it is acknowledged.

For evidence I call on the diminutive Brazilian Juninho's contribution to Sydney FC last year. Despite injury, and limited game time, he was clearly the most creative and intuitive passer in the competition (just ask Alex Brosque), but is credited with an equal season-high five "goal assists" – closer to five assists a game by my reckoning.

Newcastle are widely regarded as having the best passing side in the league, but since the departure of Paul Okon and Stu Musialik, they don't really have any one individual who you would classify as an outstanding passer of the ball. Perhaps they are a good possession team.

Their young Korean Jin Hyung Song has the technique and vision to join Carlos Hernandez, Charlie Miller and Steve Corica as the most creative passers in the league,

though I'm not sure the stats will back up my opinion.

Finally, the last word is on our refereeing panel, God bless them. By my calculation about 75 per cent are involved in the teaching, law enforcement or financial management professions.

Enough said? Make up your own mind. Another group of closet party animals if you ask me. And put your cards away gentlemen, that is not classified as dissent, it's an educated statistical projection.

Remember stats don't compete with the beauty and artistry of good football – so this weekend I'll kick back, enjoy some quality A-League action, and consume the 27,994th through 28,000th can of Coke in my career.

**I can't comprehend how a safety-first pass can have the same value in a statistical sense as a perfectly timed defence-splitting pass?**





**FIVE MAD MINUTES WITH...**

# MASSIMO

The Queensland Roar midfielder opens up on star signs, karaoke and why Griffin McMaster shouldn't wear gangster-style clothes

**Afternoon, Massimo. It was your birthday last week; are you a typical Virgo?**

Yeah, I'm quite tidy.

**Do you like everything to be in the correct position and all that?**

Yeah, definitely mate – it has to be.

**And does that transfer over to game day?**

Yeah, everything's got to go to plan and has to be in the right order. And I have to do everything the same way in the same order.

**Give us one example...**

I like to have three litres of Powerade and a litre-and-a-half of water before I leave the house or else I feel I'm going to have a bad game.

**All that Powerade probably explains why you do so much running during a game...**

Yeah, maybe, who knows?

**You've only scored one goal in**

**your Hyundai A-League career – how come?**

[Laughs.] Yeah, it's a bit disappointing but I guess it shows the type of player I am. I'd rather somebody else score, and take the glory themselves.

**Which midfielder do you particularly look forward to playing against?**

I always like playing against Steve Corica. I've got a lot of respect for him and what he's done in his career.

**I'd like to play Kaka. He makes it look easy.**

He's a top midfielder and one we've always looked out for.

**In terms of worldwide players, who would you most like to come up against?**

I'd like to play against Kaká. He makes it look so easy... I wonder what I'd do against him. I wouldn't mind getting the chance. If anyone wants to hook that up I'll be happy to...

**OK, we'll see if we can hook you up with a transfer to Serie A then...**

[Laughs.]

**We reckon you're a bit of an unsung hero at Roar; what would you sing at karaoke?**

Why don't you like me...

**Who sings that?**

[Laughs.]

**Go on, sing it to us...**

[Laughs.] I'm trying to think...

**What's it called again?**

I made it up!

**You made it up? That's why we didn't get it... So you're a singer/songwriter as well as a midfielder?**

[Laughs.] It's one of those things I make up here and there. Geez, what song? *No woman, no cry*.

**Liam Reddy's a bit of a prankster at the Roar, do you ever fancy turning the tables?**

All the time.

**Have you tried to yet?**

No, I'm still thinking about it.

**Who's got the worst hair at the club?**

Michael Zullo. I don't know what he's done at the back of his hair, but it looks disgusting.

**Harsh – but probably fair.**

**What three people, dead or alive, would you invite to a dinner party?**

Britney Spears, that Kim Kardashian chick, and I've always liked Natalie Portman.

**Bit of a theme running, then... Who's got the worst dress sense at the club?**

Griffin McMaster.

**How bad is it?**

Ah, it's not too bad. It's just the clothes he wears don't suit him. He tries to wear gangster clothes and it's really not working for him.

**Are you a bit of a style guru yourself?**



[Laughs.] I'm not bad when I try, but living in Brisbane, it's usually shorts and thong.

**Speaking of dress sense, what would you go as to a fancy dress party?**

Yoda from *Star Wars*.

**Yoda? When we have an AFW party, you have to come as Yoda... OK, maybe not. Tell us a joke instead...**

Errr, what do you call a deer with no eyes?

Dunno mate...

No eye-dear.

**Oh God...**

[Laughs.] Shocking, isn't it?

**Yes, it is. What's the funniest thing that's happened at training recently?**

Josh McCloughan just breaking everyone – I don't know what's wrong with him. He's in one of his moods, but he's breaking everyone's legs and it seems to be the youth players at the moment. It's been quite funny, actually.

**Who's tougher? Craig Moore or Danny Tiatto?**

Ah geez, it's got to be Danny.

**Danny scares us. What's your favourite movie?** *Dumb & Dumber* [laughs].

**That's one of the best movies ever made.**

Yeah, exactly – it's a classic.

**Who's going to win the A-League this year?**

Do I have to say Roar?

**You can say whatever you want.**

Probably Sydney.

**Roar as grand finalists?**

We'll make the grand final but Sydney might edge us out.

**Our final question... and it's the most important one we've got: Simon Hill's goatee, what's going on there?**

[Roars with laughter.] I never rate Simon Hill with any facial hair, he's just got to sort it out and stay clean mate – that suits him best.

**Hahaha fair enough – mate, thanks for that.**





# IN SAFE HANDS

Now he's returned home, it's a time of celebration for former Australia goalkeeper **MARK BOSNICH**, Central Coast-Mariners and, of course, the Hyundai A-League

■ **WORDS** Thomas Woodgate

**H**E'S a man who needs no introduction. His credentials speak for themselves. And while his name has become synonymous with his off-field stories, it's on the field, where he rightfully belongs, that Mark Bosnich is starting to reinforce himself as the player we all remember: one of Australia's greats.

His arrival in the Hyundai A-League, on a seven-week contract with Central Coast Mariners to cover the suspended Danny Vukovic, is yet another indication of the positive strides being made in the game.

More importantly, perhaps, it's a watershed for Bosnich. This is the start of a new chapter in his life. Gone are the controversies. Gone are the multi-million dollar contracts. Gone are the tabloid columns.

And what's left is so much more newsworthy. So much more interesting. Here we have a player, one of the best this country has ever produced, returning to ply his trade.

Better still, Bosnich is hungry. He's not here for a vacation. He's not here to turn out for a few games, earn his money and disappear. He's a man on a mission.

Spend just two minutes talking to him and there's passion and determination in every word. There's a burning desire to do well, to make a real go of this chance in a league he describes as in "an exceptional state" and possesses a standard that is "excellent".

Better still, you believe what he's saying. It's from the heart. It's sincere. And just as he's happy to be here, we're happy to have him back.

The positive effect isn't lost on his new teammates, either. "It's fantastic having Bos around," Mariners' captain Alex Wilkinson says. "He's fitted in really well with the boys."

"Bos is a larger than life character, he's very loud in the change-room and you can't shut him up, even if you want to. He's a great person to have around the club."

"It's been an enjoyable and positive experience (having Bosnich at Central Coast)," Mariners' goalkeeper coach John Crawley explains. "It's good to see him back on track and loving life again."

"It's huge for the club and to get players like Mark back into our league is a real bonus."

"The boys appreciate having him around, he's got a big personality. He likes to take the mickey and have the

**I'm humbled. I'm just trying to keep things in perspective. I'm taking it step by step and it has to be like that.**

boys take the mickey out of him, too. It's a colourful environment when he's there."

But for all the bravado and brashness, Bosnich still has his quieter moments, like before his debut against Queensland Roar, in round three at Suncorp Stadium.

"Up until 10 minutes before we went out to warm up he was reading a book quietly in the corner of the change-room," Wilkinson explains. "Once you get him out on the pitch though, he's loud for 90 minutes."

"It's good to have a goalkeeper speaking all the time because it keeps the defence switched on."

"Even when we went 3-0 up he was still in our ears making sure we concentrated."

One look in Bosnich's eyes at half-time of the Queensland game, and that was all the indication you needed of his seriousness. The TV camera in the Mariners' dressing room revealed a man deep in thought, composing himself for the job ahead, ensuring he was there for the team that has welcomed him with open arms. Not that Bosnich was aware we were all with him – in spirit anyway – during the half-time break.

"Those are obviously very candid moments, but I'm definitely focused and here to do my job for Central Coast," Bosnich tells us. "I want to give a good account of myself."

And, on both fronts, he is certainly doing so. But his presence reaches further than one player covering for another during a suspension period – Bosnich sees it as his chance to give something back.

"It's a wonderful opportunity to come back and spend time at home," he says. "Also, to try and give something back to the game that nursed me as a child. 'If I have anything to prove, it would be to myself.'"

And it's in that defiance you sense the motivation that existed years ago when he was lighting up the stage in England and playing for its biggest teams. Now he's finally got an outlet in which to express himself again. To be part of something good, something positive.

And while Bosnich laughs at the notion of being an "ambassador" – he says he's "still got a lot of work to do" in that department – there are signs his new-found responsibilities are placing him in a more mature and experienced position, and it's one he's happy with.





With Mariners' first-choice goalkeeper, Danny Vukovic, sitting out his five-match suspension, Bosnich is happy to offer advice to the young star – only when it's asked for.

"I don't want to impose myself on him because he is his own man," Bosnich says. "But any time he's asked for advice I've tried to help the best way I can.

"I just wanted to give him space to breathe – if he's got anything to ask that's cool and if he hasn't, that's cool too."

And he's also quick to heap praise on the Olyroo keeper. "He's a good kid and a really talented goalkeeper – he's got the potential to be something really special." High praise indeed.

Vukovic, for his part, has openly discussed becoming "good mates" with Bosnich, as well as the "smart" advice he's had passed on to him.

what the situation and you've got to play the game and not the situation," he says. "If you don't enjoy it, you shouldn't be doing it."

And even with the euphoria of the first game back in competitive football, Bosnich refuses to get carried away – eschewing a more calm, almost holistic approach to the interest and frenzy his appearance in the A-League is generating.

"It was just really nice – I'm humbled," he explains. "I'm just trying to keep things in perspective, because there are still four games to go." And Bosnich has one overriding thought right now: to take everything one step at a time.

The football-loving public aren't the only ones who want to know what Mark Bosnich is going to do next.

CENTRAL  
COAST


"The thing I learned most from [Mark] was to move on and look to the future. There is no point looking back," Vukovic has said of his time so far with Bosnich.

But even in the face of a much hyped return to football, Bosnich remains pragmatic about the occasion. "You have got to enjoy it no matter

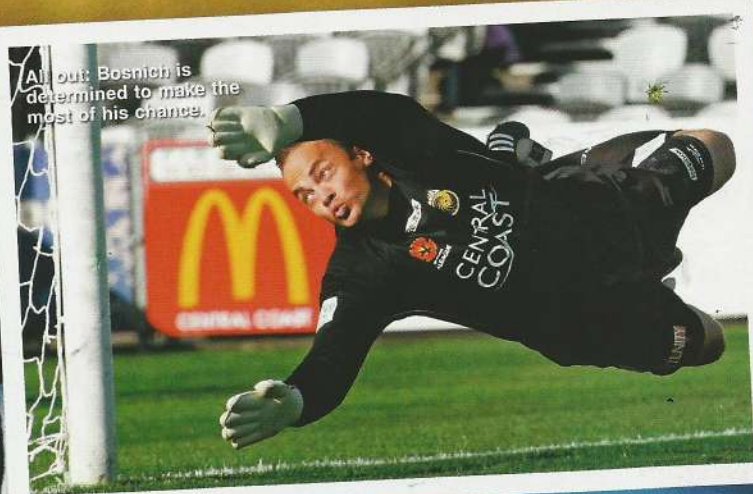
When we ask how far ahead he's looked into his future, his response: "Tomorrow." After a dry

laugh, he continues, "Seriously, I've said that to everyone, even my parents – even my parents ask that.

"I'm really taking it step by step and it has to be like this. It just has to be."

What happens next with Bosnich is unclear. Both player and club remain focused on the short-term, but we can expect an offer to come in from somewhere at the end of his stint with Central Coast. The positive outlook for Bosnich is a refreshing change after years in the football wilderness. Perhaps media column inches will start to focus on what's in front of them right now: the rebirth of a football great. 

Al about Bosnich is determined to make the most of his chance.





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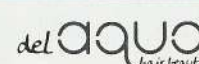
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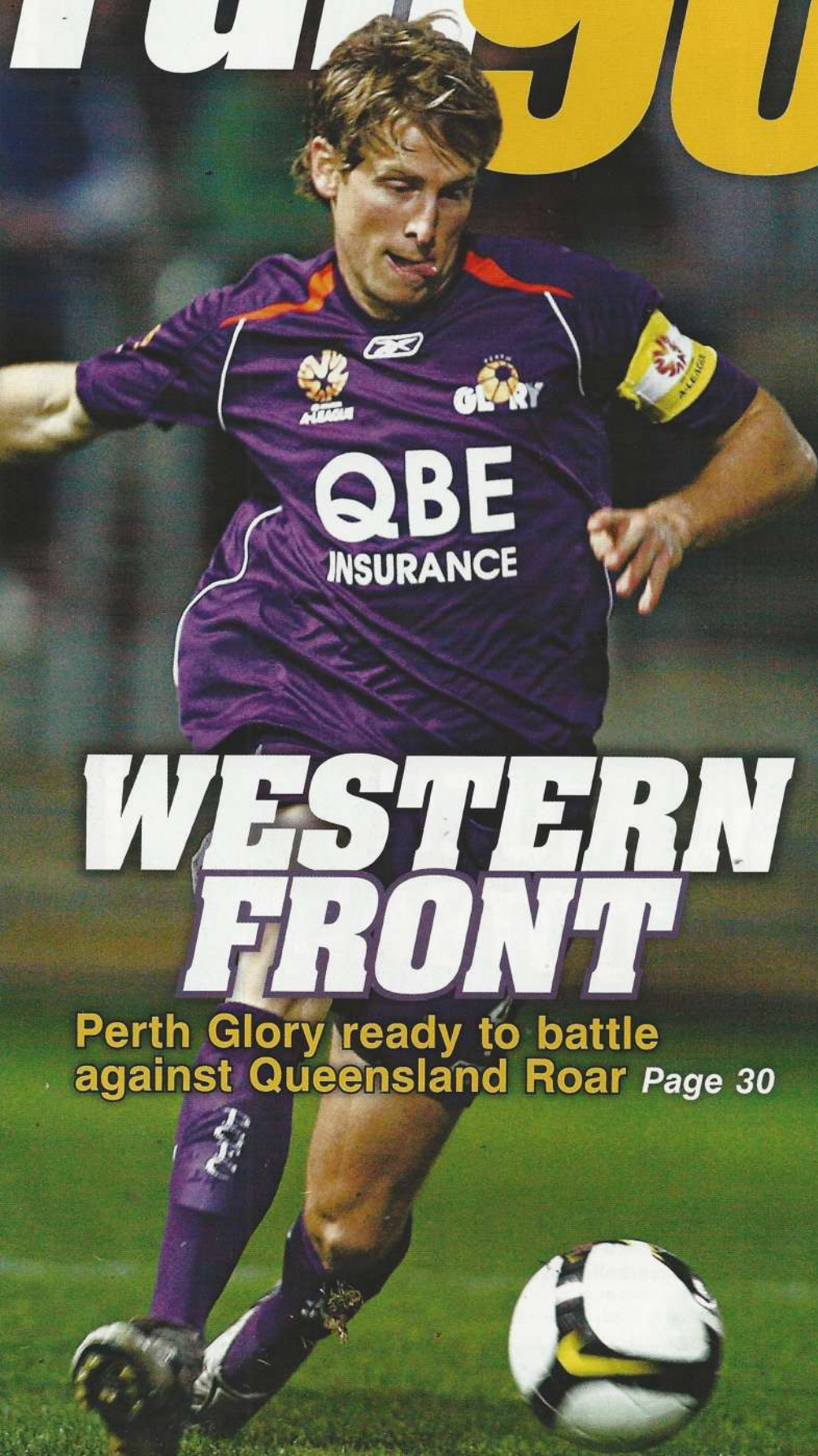
HYUNDAI  
A-LEAGUE



THE  
**Full 90**

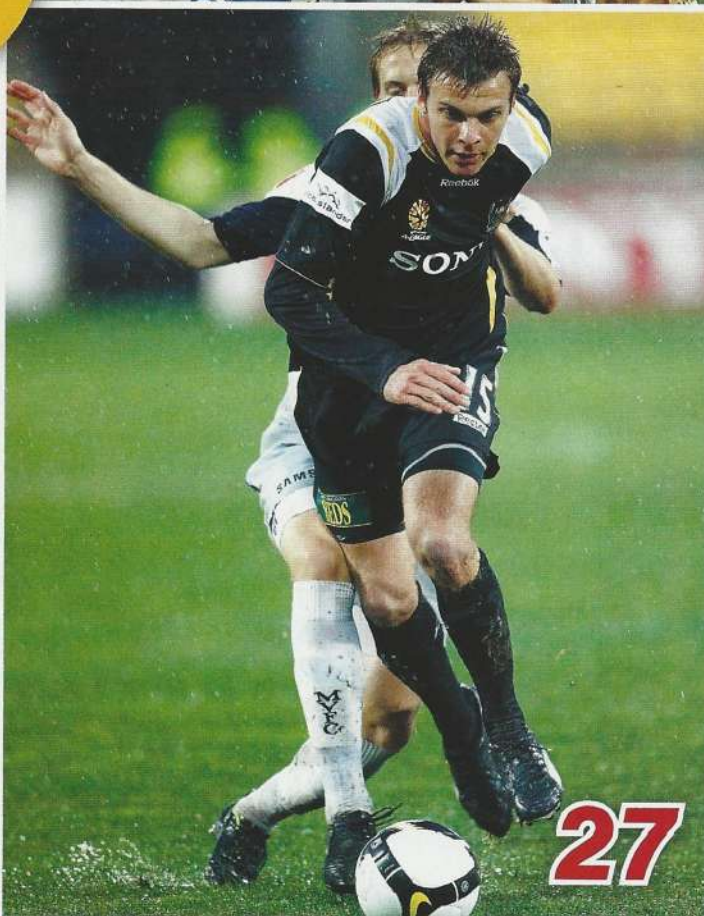
OFFICIAL PROGRAM INSIDE

# THE **Full 90**



## **WESTERN FRONT**

Perth Glory ready to battle  
against Queensland Roar *Page 30*



### **PREVIEWS!**

- Perth Glory  
v Queensland Roar
- Newcastle Jets  
v Sydney FC
- Wellington Phoenix v  
Central Coast Mariners
- Melbourne Victory  
v Adelaide United





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Friday, 8pm, 12/09/08  
TELSTRA DOME

Melbourne Victory



Adelaide United



ROBBIE SLATER

# EVERYTHING TO PLAY FOR

Adelaide United start a season-defining period with their round four visit to Melbourne Victory. Can the Reds withstand Ernie Merrick's revitalised side?

**T**HIS fixture will always be one of the biggest on our domestic calendar, due to that unforgettable grand final of the Hyundai A-League season two, where Melbourne Victory crushed Adelaide United in a very one-sided affair. The game was also made famous by Archie Thompson's unstoppable five-goal haul.

Who knows? The A-League season four may just end up with these two in the title decider at the end of the season, as both these sides are widely tipped to go close in 2008/09.

## AT HOME

As the best supported team in the competition, Melbourne Victory need to turn their home – the massive Telstra Dome – into a fortress. (Let's face it, with huge local support and an intimidating atmosphere it already should be).

It was Victory's home form that cost them a place in the finals last season: 10 games at the Dome for a return of just two wins, five draws and two losses. Indications are that this is all about to change, as Melbourne have started the season very well.

A hard-fought draw against arch-rivals Sydney in the opener, a convincing 4-2 win in Wellington, and, of course, the 5-0 thrashing of defending champions Newcastle suggest they are ready to put the disappointing performances of season three behind them and do so in an emphatic style.

Melbourne will start this fixture clear favourites, having scored nine goals in their last two games. In the Newcastle game, there was no doubt that when



Archie Thompson (above) came on for the injured Michael Thwaite, the game changed instantly and Victory played a fast fluent attacking game that destroyed the champions.

Will Ernie Merrick play Thompson, Ney Fabiano, Danny Allsopp and Carlos Hernandez from the start? It would be tempting. I think that if he does, it will certainly be a statement of intent.

Against the Jets, Jose Luis Lopez and Billy Celeski did a great job defensively in the midfield, which in turn allowed Hernandez a lot of freedom.

Tactically, Melbourne and Adelaide are very different; the Reds like to play with width (they even have genuine wide players) – while Melbourne prefer a short-passing game and they keep it quite narrow, which seems to suit their direct style.

## THE VISITORS

Adelaide United enter a period that is certainly going to test them in all areas – their first-team quality and the strength in depth of their squad. This is a season-defining few weeks for Aurelio Vidmar's men.

The Reds play five games in 17 days; two of which are their much-anticipated AFC Asian Champions League quarter-final encounter with Japanese giants, Kashima Antlers, with tough domestic games sandwiched inbetween.

With the travel involved, as well as the intensity of the matches, recovery will be crucial for the Reds.

Coming to the Dome, Vidmar's side's form has been good as well: a draw in Queensland, followed by convincing wins over Perth Glory and Wellington Phoenix, should put them in a positive frame of mind to face a fired-up Melbourne side.

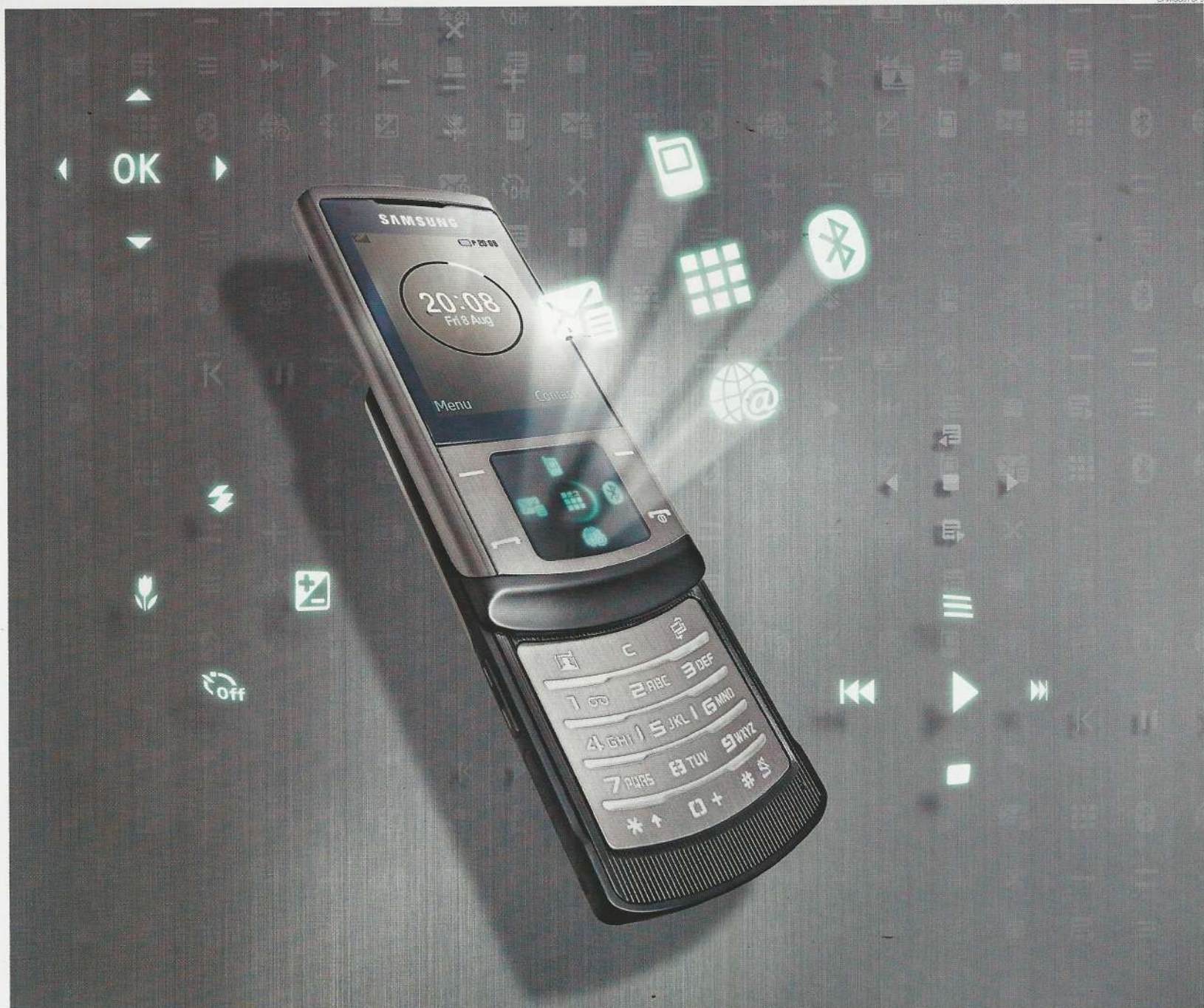


## FINAL SCORE

The key to this game will be if Adelaide United's defence can contain (if selected) the attacking trio of Danny Allsopp, Archie Thompson and Ney Fabiano. United haven't been completely convincing so far this term and you have to favour a home victory.

**“Melbourne Victory will start this fixture as clear favourites.”**





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# Melbourne Victory

Versus

# Adelaide United



## SEASON 2008/09 OVERVIEW

League position: 1st  
 Played: 3  
 Won: 2  
 Drawn: 1  
 Lost: 0  
 Goals For: 9  
 Goals Against: 2  
 Leading goal scorer:  
 Danny Allsopp, 4  
 Shots on goal: 17.7  
 Fouls conceded: 17.7  
 Tackles: 25  
 Effective tackles: 62%  
 Passes complete: 232  
 Passing accuracy: 72.6%  
 Crosses: 3.7  
 Corners: 7  
 Goalkeeper saves: 2

### HEAD-TO-HEAD

Played, W, L, D: 12, 4, 5, 3  
 Leading goalscorer: Archie Thompson, 6  
 Goals scored: 16  
 Last season: D 2-2

### ODDS

\$1.85 win  
 \$3.35 draw

\*Odds courtesy of TAB Sportsbet

DATE: FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12 VENUE: TELSTRA DOME KICK-OFF: 8PM (LOCAL) 8PM (AEST)  
 REFEREE: MATTHEW BREEZE ASSISTANT REFEREES: HAKAN ANAZ & SHAUN EVANS

P G

-2	0	0	0	Michael THEOKLITOS (GK) <b>1</b>
3	1	0	0	Kevin MUSCAT (C) <b>2</b>
3	0	1	0	Michael THWAITE <b>3</b>
1	0	0	0	Steven PACE <b>4</b>
0	0	0	0	Sebastian RYALL <b>5</b>
3	0	0	0	Matthew KEMP <b>7</b>
2	1	0	0	Grant BREBNER <b>8</b>
3	4	0	0	Danny ALLSOPP <b>9</b>
1	1	0	0	Archie THOMPSON <b>10</b>
3	1	1	0	NEY FABIANO <b>11</b>
3	0	1	0	Rodrigo VARGAS <b>12</b>

### SUBS

1	0	0	0	Mitchell LANGERAK (GK) <b>20</b>
3	0	0	0	Billy CELESKI <b>14</b>
2	0	0	0	Tom PONDELJAK <b>15</b>
3	1	0	0	Carlos HERNANDEZ <b>16</b>

### REST OF SQUAD

6. Steve PANTELIDIS, 18. Leigh BROXHAM, 19. Evan BERGER, 13. Nathan ELASI, 21. Daniel VASILEVSKI, 22. Nick WARD, 30. Tommi TOMICH (GK)

### COACH

Ernie MERRICK

P G

20	Eugene GALEKOVIC (GK)	3	0	0	0
2	Robert CORNTHWAITE	1	0	0	0
4	Angelo COSTANZO	3	0	1	0
5	Michael VALKANIS	0	0	0	0
6	CASSIO	0	0	0	0
7	Lucas PANTELIS	3	1	1	0
8	Kristian SARKIES	0	0	0	0
9	Paul AGOSTINO	2	0	0	0
10	CRISTIANO	3	2	0	0
13	Travis DODD	3	2	1	0
14	Scott JAMIESON	3	0	1	0

### SUBS

30	Mark BIRIGHITTI (GK)	0	0	0	0
19	Sasa OGNENOVSKI	3	0	0	0
21	Jason SPAGNUOLO	3	0	0	0
24	Paul REID	3	0	1	0

### REST OF SQUAD

1. Daniel BELTRAME, 17. Isyan ERDOGAN

### COACH

Aurelio VIDMAR

## SEASON 2008/09 OVERVIEW

League position: 3rd  
 Played: 3  
 Won: 2  
 Drawn: 1  
 Lost: 0  
 Goals For: 5  
 Goals Against: 1  
 Leading goal scorer:  
 Cristiano, Travis Dodd, 2  
 Shots on goal: 11.7  
 Fouls conceded: 15.7  
 Tackles: 23  
 Effective tackles: 57%  
 Passes complete: 294.3  
 Passing accuracy: 77%  
 Crosses: 4.7  
 Corners: 3  
 Goalkeeper saves: 4.3

### HEAD-TO-HEAD

Played, W, L, D: 12, 5, 4, 3  
 Leading goalscorer:  
 Travis Dodd, 5  
 Goals scored: 12  
 Last season: D 2-2

### ODDS

\$4.00 win  
 \$3.35 draw

\*Odds courtesy of TAB Sportsbet

### ON TARGET

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16

### OFF TARGET

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16

### CORNERS

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16

### FOULS

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16

\*Team lists are subject to change

HALF-TIME

FULL-TIME

### ON TARGET

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16

### OFF TARGET

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16

### CORNERS

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16

### FOULS

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16

## COMING UP

» ROUND 5: CC MARINERS, BLUETONGUE STADIUM  
 » ROUND 6: QLD ROAR, TELSTRA DOME

## COMING UP

» ROUND 5: SYDNEY FC, SFS  
 » ROUND 6: NEWCASTLE JETS, HINDMARSH STADIUM

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Newcastle Jets

Saturday, 7pm, 13/09/08  
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Sydney FC



TOM SMITHIES

# TEST OF TITLE CREDENTIALS

Newcastle Jets face Sydney FC at home for round four's biggest clash. For both sides, it's a chance to prove they have what it takes this season

**F**OOTBALLERS are often grateful for a rest, but the first of the Hyundai A-League's international breaks could not have come at a worse time for Newcastle Jets or Sydney FC. For entirely different reasons, coaches Gary Van Egmond and John Kosmina were left frustrated as they put their feet up last weekend: Kosmina, because his team has recently hit spectacular form; and Van

Egmond, because his side couldn't get back in the saddle after a painful crash.

The way their teams get back in the groove in round four will say a lot about their championship aspirations for the season.

Sydney are flying after scoring eight goals in two games, and only Melbourne Victory's demolition of Newcastle has kept them off top spot.

Their 5-2 win over Perth Glory in round three was comprehensive, but was in part due to the controversial sending off of Glory's Dino Djulbic for spitting. The furor over Djulbic's subsequent five-game ban took away, to some extent, from the fact Sydney have been scoring bags of goals.

Newcastle, by contrast, were on the receiving end of five goals and couldn't find one in response. It was

a torturous trip to Melbourne's Telstra Dome for the champions, who were a shadow of the organised, inventive team that swept to success in the grand final.

## AT HOME

For all their enticing forward play last year, Newcastle kept a solid defence – so the amateurish displays of key men Jade North and Ante Covic at the back in the thrashing by Melbourne were particularly hard to take for Van Egmond.

North was badly affected when his dream move to Europe fell over, where he seemed set to make the shift, and Van Egmond has publicly called on him to regain his focus at Newcastle.

One of the more peculiar challenges the coach faces, even as the championship winner last season,





# “ If Newcastle find their mojo, they'll give Sydney a stern test.”

is reinventing his squad given the amount of departures. A defining issue will be how well new signing Jesper Hakanesson can lead the line, with early indications promising, and how Korean star Jin-Hyung Song (right) can push on.

Van Egmond has gone back to basics in training, determined to rediscover the attacking verve of last year, and if Newcastle can find their mojo they will give Sydney their steepest test yet.

## THE VISITORS

It takes a lot to please John Kosmina and Sydney's coach couldn't help but complain about his team's performance against Perth, despite the favourable score.

What worried him was the defending side of the team, with Perth gifted goals just as Central Coast had been in round two.

The return of Tony Popovic is not only well-timed in light of Jacob Timpano being sent out for an ankle operation – it also restores the experience he offers in the backline, and adds to the heart of Sydney's defence.

One of the smartest organisers of a back four around, Popovic was barking instructions from the second he stepped on the pitch in the second half against Perth and the return of order was palpable.



Sydney's spine is either experienced or old depending on your take and in the two games they won, they were able to dictate the pace for much of it.

What Kosmina would be happy about is the combinations of his forwards, with Steve Corica at the heart of an enticing movement.

The intelligence of Mark Bridge has been added to Corica's flair and Alex Brosque's pace, and all that with marquee man John Aloisi still due to return from injury.



## FINAL SCORE

A persuasive crowd should help Newcastle take the game to Sydney, but Popovic will relish the challenge of leading the defence. An early goal for Newcastle will really open the game up but the longer it is level, the likelier Sydney are to maintain their winning run.

IMAGE: GETTY IMAGES.



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# Newcastle Jets

Versus

# Sydney FC



## SEASON 2008/09 OVERVIEW

League position: 6th  
 Played: 3  
 Won: 0  
 Drawn: 2  
 Lost: 1  
 Goals For: 4  
 Goals Against: 9  
 Leading goal scorer:  
 Joel Griffiths, 2  
 Shots on goal: 13.7  
 Fouls conceded: 18.7  
 Tackles: 31.7  
 Effective tackles: 67.9%  
 Passes complete: 279.3  
 Passing accuracy: 76.8%  
 Crosses: 3.7  
 Corners: 7  
 Goalkeeper saves: 4.7

### HEAD-TO-HEAD

Played, W, L, D: 11, 2, 5, 4  
 Leading goalscorer:  
 Rodriguez, 3  
 Goals scored: 9  
 Last season: L 1-0

### ODDS

\$3.00 win  
 \$3.30 draw

\*Odds courtesy of TAB Sportsbet

DATE: SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13 VENUE: ENERGY AUSTRALIA STADIUM KICK-OFF: 7PM (LOCAL) 7PM (AEST)  
 REFEREE: PETER O'LEARY ASSISTANT REFEREES: ALEX GLASGOW & SARAH HO

P G ■ ■

3	0	0	0	Ante COVIC (GK) <b>1</b>
2	0	1	0	Adam GRIFFITHS <b>2</b>
2	1	1	0	Jade NORTH <b>3</b>
3	0	0	0	James HOLLAND <b>5</b>
3	0	0	0	Matt THOMPSON <b>8</b>
3	2	0	0	Joel GRIFFITHS (C) <b>9</b>
3	0	0	0	Jin-Hyung SONG <b>10</b>
3	0	1	0	Tarek ELRICH <b>11</b>
3	0	1	0	Jobe WHEELHOUSE <b>12</b>
3	0	0	0	Adam D'APUZZO <b>13</b>
3	0	1	0	Edmundo ZURA <b>23</b>

### SUBS

0	0	0	0	Ben KENNEDY (GK) <b>20</b>
1	0	1	0	Jesper HAKANSSON <b>6</b>
2	0	0	0	Jason HOFFMAN <b>15</b>
2	0	0	0	Ben KANTAROVSKI <b>16</b>

### REST OF SQUAD

7. Kaz PATAFTA, 14. Shaun ONTONG,  
 17. Antun KOVACIC, 18. Noel SPENCER,  
 19. Jason NAIDOVSKI

### COACH

Gary Van EGMOND

P G ■ ■

1	Clint BOLTON (GK)	3	0	0	0
2	Iain FYFE	3	0	1	0
4	Simon COLOSIMO	3	0	2	0
5	Mitchell PRENTICE	1	0	0	0
6	Tony POPOVIC	1	0	0	0
7	Robbie MIDDLEBY	3	0	1	0
8	Stuart MUSIALIK	1	0	2	0
10	Steve CORICA	3	3	0	0
14	Alex BROSQUE	2	1	0	0
15	Terry McFLYNN	3	0	1	0
19	Mark BRIDGE	3	1	0	0

### SUBS

20	Ivan NECEVSKI (GK)	0	0	0	0
12	Shannon COLE	3	2	1	0
23	John ALOISI	1	0	0	0
26	Dez GIRALDI	2	0	0	0

### REST OF SQUAD

3. Nikolas TSATTALIOS, 11. Brendon SANTALAB,  
 18. Adam CASEY, 21. Adam BIDDLE, 22. Michael  
 ENFIELD, 24. Ryan WALSH

### COACH

John KOSMINA

## SEASON 2008/09 OVERVIEW

League position: 2nd  
 Played: 3  
 Won: 2  
 Drawn: 1  
 Lost: 0  
 Goals For: 8  
 Goals Against: 4  
 Leading goal scorer:  
 Steve Corica, 3  
 Shots on goal: 11  
 Fouls conceded: 14.3  
 Tackles: 36  
 Effective tackles: 73.5  
 Passes complete: 275  
 Passing accuracy: 77.3%  
 Crosses: 2.3  
 Corners: 3.7  
 Goalkeeper saves: 6.3

### HEAD-TO-HEAD

Played, W, L, D: 11, 5, 2, 4  
 Leading goalscorer:  
 Alex Brosque, 3  
 Goals scored: 12  
 Last season: W 1-0

### ODDS

\$2.20 win  
 \$3.30 draw

\*Odds courtesy of TAB Sportsbet

### ON TARGET

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16

### OFF TARGET

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16

### CORNERS

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16

### FOULS

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16

\*Team lists are subject to change

HALF-TIME

FULL-TIME

### ON TARGET

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16

### OFF TARGET

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16

### CORNERS

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16

### FOULS

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16

## COMING UP

ROUND 5: QLD ROAR, SUNCORP STADIUM  
 ROUND 6: ADELAIDE UNITED, HINDMARSH STADIUM

## COMING UP

ROUND 5: ADELAIDE UNITED, SFS  
 ROUND 6: WELL PHOENIX, WESTPAC STADIUM

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WESTPAC STADIUM



Wellington Phoenix  Central Coast Mariners



THOMAS WOODGATE

# TIME TO SEIZE THE MOMENT

Wellington and Central Coast have been involved in a few high-scoring games, yet both sides have endured a stuttering start to the new season

**O**NE side's leaking goals, while the other is starting to find its shooting boots. It has all the ingredients of a one-sided affair, but since when has football been this predictable?

If football results are always decided on form, this fixture has a Central Coast Mariners victory written all over it. Wellington Phoenix haven't quite got going this season and their defensive signings haven't stopped the goals going in, while the Mariners' frontline is spreading the love when it comes to grabbing the net-busters. With the two clubs coming off rather contrasting results in round three, there's everything to play for – and for very different reasons.

## AT HOME

Pre-season talk had Wellington Phoenix installed as outside bets for a top-four berth, mainly due to the signings they'd made. Unfortunately for Phoenix, though, evidence after the opening three rounds hasn't supported this confidence. Seven goals conceded in the previous two rounds, after an encouraging opening round draw with Queensland Roar, has seen the critics circling above Wellington.

Coach Ricki Herbert's comments that his side weren't competitive enough in the 3-0 drubbing against Adelaide United in round three won't have filled fans with optimism. But this is a new week and a home round, so improvements will be demanded from Herbert. Another defeat – even at this early stage – needs to be avoided.

With striker Shane Smeltz missing up front in the side's last outing, the team lacked the cutting edge that



looked so promising in the first two rounds. However, when he returns to the side, Phoenix will be able to offer a lot more in the final third. His contribution shapes the side's chances considerably.

Defensively, Phoenix haven't improved as much as was expected in light of their arrivals, including Andrew Durante (above), and the spine of the side needs to tighten up and apply more cohesion to bring stability to the team.

## THE VISITORS

You can guarantee that Lawrie McKinna's men will be well organised and the nucleus of the side will be strong. They've added width this season and the four strikers are all vying for two spots up top – the fruits of this were evident in the four goals the team put past Roar in round three.

While Mariners continue to score bags of goals, they're conceding them, too, which makes for great viewing for the neutral, but McKinna will be looking for this area to improve.

The onus will be on Phoenix to take the game to Mariners, to give their season an injection of enthusiasm. For Mariners, the opening 20 minutes will be crucial to keep the backline intact and not to repeat the opening 20 against Sydney FC in round two – where they started slowly and trailed before picking up their game.

Mariners' industrious midfield will again be the focal point of controlling the game and supplying the service to the red-hot forward line. They'll have to also be on their guard against an energetic start from Phoenix, so the midfield tussle will be key early on.

“Another defeat for Wellington – even at this stage – needs to be avoided.”



## FINAL SCORE

Central Coast come into this round after scoring six goals in two games, but they also conceded five in the process – will there be goals in this one? I expect there to be, and I think a high-scorer for Mariners will result in a 3-2 win for McKinna's men.



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# Wellington Phoenix

Versus

# Central Coast Mariners



## SEASON 2008/09 OVERVIEW

League position: 8th

Played: 3

Won: 0

Drawn: 1

Lost: 2

Goals For: 3

Goals Against: 8

Leading goal scorer:

Shane Smeltz, 3

Shots on goal: 12

Fouls conceded: 16

Tackles: 24.3

Effective tackles: 64%

Passes complete: 234.7

Passing accuracy: 72.6%

Crosses: 3.7

Corners: 5

Goalkeeper saves: 2.7

### HEAD-TO-HEAD

Played, lost, drawn: 3, 3, 0

Leading goalscorer:

Elrich, 1

Goals scored: 1

Last season: L 2-1

### ODDS

\$2.70 win

\$3.30 draw

\*Odds courtesy of TAB Sportsbet

DATE: SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14 VENUE: WESTPAC STADIUM KICK-OFF: 5PM (LOCAL) 3PM (AEST)

REFEREE: STREBRE DELOVSKI ASSISTANT REFEREES: MARK RULE &amp; GLEN LOCHRIE

P G W D L

3	0	0	0	Glen MOSS (GK) <b>20</b>
1	0	0	0	Jeremy CHRISTIE <b>2</b>
3	0	0	0	Tony LOCHHEAD <b>3</b>
3	0	0	0	Jon McKAIN <b>4</b>
2	0	1	0	Leo BERTOS <b>7</b>
2	3	0	0	SHANE SMELTZ <b>9</b>
3	0	1	0	Michael FERRANTE <b>10</b>
3	0	1	0	DANIEL <b>11</b>
3	0	0	0	Richard JOHNSON <b>12</b>
3	0	0	0	Troy HEARFIELD <b>13</b>
3	0	1	0	Andrew DURANTE (C) <b>22</b>

### SUBS

1	0	0	0	Mark PASTON (GK) <b>1</b>
3	0	0	0	Adam KWASNIK <b>15</b>
1	0	1	0	David MULLIGAN <b>16</b>
1	0	1	0	Leilei GAO <b>21</b>

### REST OF SQUAD

8 Vaughan COVENY, 17 Vince LIA, 18 Ben SIGMUND, 19 Greg DRAPER, 23 Costa BARBAROUSES

### COACH

Ricki HERBERT

P G W D L

40	Mark BOSNICH (GK)	1	0	0	0
4	Pedj BOJIC	3	0	1	0
5	Bradley PORTER	3	0	0	0
7	John HUTCHINSON	3	0	0	0
15	Andrew CLARK	3	0	2	0
16	Nigel BOOGAARD	2	0	1	0
17	Matthew OSMAN	2	0	0	0
18	Alex WILKINSON (C)	3	0	0	0
19	Matt SIMON	3	2	1	0
22	Sasho PETROVSKI	3	2	1	0
23	Mile JEDINAK	1	1	1	0

### SUBS

1	Matthew NASH	0	0	0	0
6	David D'APUZZO	2	0	0	0
9	Nik MRDJA	2	0	0	0
10	Adrian CACERES	2	0	0	0

### REST OF SQUAD

2. Andre GUMPRECHT, 8. Dean HEFFERNAN, 12. Greg OWENS, 13. Paul O'GRADY, 20. Danny VUKOVIC

### COACH

Lawrie MCKINNA

## SEASON 2008/09 OVERVIEW

League position: 4th

Played: 3

Won: 1

Drawn: 1

Lost: 1

Goals For: 7

Goals Against: 6

Leading goal scorer:

Petrovski, Simon, MacAllister, 2

Shots on goal: 12.7

Fouls conceded: 17

Tackles: 32.3

Effective tackles: 63.8%

Passes complete: 214.7

Passing accuracy: 74.5%

Crosses: 4.7

Corners: 5.7

Goalkeeper saves: 1.7

### HEAD-TO-HEAD

Played, W, L, D: 3, 3, 0

Leading goalscorer:

Kwasnik, Mrdja, 2

Goals scored: 7

Last season: W 2-1

### ODDS

\$2.40 win

\$3.30 draw

\*Odds courtesy of TAB Sportsbet

### ON TARGET

### OFF TARGET

### CORNERS

### FOULS

1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	5	6	7	8	5	6	7	8	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	9	10	11	12	9	10	11	12	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	13	14	15	16	13	14	15	16	13	14	15	16

HALF-TIME

FULL-TIME

\*Team lists are subject to change

### ON TARGET

### OFF TARGET

### CORNERS

### FOULS

1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	5	6	7	8	5	6	7	8	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	9	10	11	12	9	10	11	12	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	13	14	15	16	13	14	15	16	13	14	15	16

## COMING UP

» ROUND 5: PERTH GLORY, MEMBERS EQUITY  
 » ROUND 6: SYDNEY FC, WESTPAC STADIUM

## COMING UP

» ROUND 5: MELB VICTORY, BLUETONGUE STADIUM  
 » ROUND 6: PERTH GLORY, BLUETONGUE STADIUM



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Perth Glory

Sunday, 3pm, 14/09/08  
MEMBERS EQUITY STADIUM



Queensland Roar



THOMAS WOODGATE

# FIRST IMPRESSIONS COUNT

Things haven't gone to plan for Perth Glory or Queensland Roar so far. Can Dave Mitchell's men lift themselves for their first home win of the season?

**R**ECENT errors have been costing both Perth Glory and Queensland Roar heavily, but although they both enter round four winless, the signs remain encouraging for the remainder of the season. In football, you're only as good as your last game. And for these two, round three of the Hyundai A-League 2008/09 season wasn't a particularly good day at the office.

After an encouraging start against Sydney last week, and with scores level at 1-1, Perth imploded. Or rather, Dino Djulbic snapped. His red card clearly shook the foundations of Glory and Perth shipped a further three goals before the half-time break.

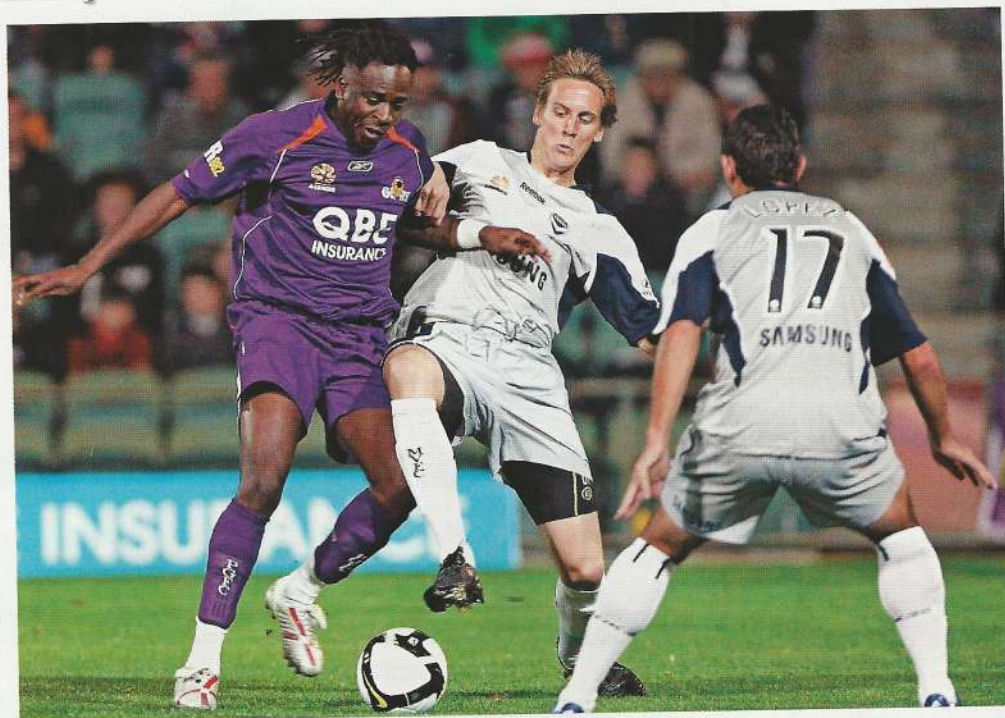
A gutsy and morale-boasting second-half spared Glory's blushes somewhat, but the alarming signs remained. Out of sorts at the back, yet much improved going forward, it's been a topsy-turvy start to the season for David Mitchell's men.

Queensland won't be happy, either, after conceding four goals at home against Central Coast Mariners in round three, but the team's success in recent years has been built on a strong away record, and there's no doubt Farina's men have the ability to put a run of results together that'll put this low-key start behind them.

## AT HOME

Perth fans will be hoping the international break has given Mitchell a chance to shore up the backline. Quite frankly, the team is destined for the wooden spoon unless mistakes are eradicated and a more disciplined approach is installed.

**The link-up play between Amaral and Dadi has been a joy.**



Going forward, Perth are improving with every game. Amaral has been increasingly influential in the middle, while Eugene Dadi's (above) growing confidence has resulted in goals and performances worthy of the faith shown in him by Mitchell. The link-up between the two has been a joy to watch at times.

Aptly supported by the industrious Scott Bulloch, who is quickly finding his feet in the A-League, there are plenty of attacking options, not forgetting the always-direct James Downey and Nikita Rukavytsya.

Perth need to use this speed on the wings to get at Roar's fullbacks, stretching a backline that lacked consistency when they played Mariners last weekend.

No matter how many goals Glory might score, captain Jamie Coyne needs to organise his troops at the back, and hope his teammates keep their heads this week.

## THE VISITORS

Where Perth's mistakes cost them against Sydney, the same can be said for Roar against Mariners at Suncorp. Uncharacteristic errors in judgement by Liam Reddy and a defensive backline that's ever changing has seen them struggle for consistency.

With Josh McCloughan yet to return, more emphasis will be placed on how Craig Moore handles Dadi after the troubles he had with Central Coast's Matt Simon. How Roar defensively deal with the Dadi-Amaral combination will set the tone for the team's performance and success in this game.

As a unit, Roar looked disjointed last week. This could be down to imbedding the new recruits, but, that said, Charlie Miller and Sergio van Dijk are showing promising signs for the season ahead. It's certainly by no means panic stations in Brisbane, but they'll be keen to get the season's first win under their belt, even if it is away from Suncorp.



## FINAL SCORE

This game has a goal-fest feel about it. Glory need to maximise home advantage; they're not making enough of an impression on visiting teams, while Queensland's counter-attacking play is their best form of defence. We're tipping a goal-tastic 2-2 draw.





# Perth Glory

## Versus

# Queensland Roar



### SEASON 2008/09 OVERVIEW

League position: 7th  
 Played: 1  
 Won: 0  
 Drawn: 1  
 Lost: 2  
 Goals For: 5  
 Goals Against: 9  
 Leading goal scorer:  
 Eugene Dadi, 3  
 Shots on goal: 11.3  
 Fouls conceded: 17.7  
 Tackles: 24.3  
 Effective tackles: 56.6%  
 Passes complete: 228.7  
 Passing accuracy: 76.6  
 Corners: 4.7  
 Goalkeeper saves: 3.3

#### HEAD-TO-HEAD

Played, W, L, D: 9, 1, 6, 2  
 Leading goalscorer:  
 Jamie Harnwell, 2  
 Goals scored: 7  
 Last season: L 4-1

#### ODDS

\$2.55 win  
 \$3.30 draw

\*Odds courtesy of TAB Sportsbet

DATE: SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14 VENUE: MEMBERS EQUITY STADIUM KICK-OFF: 3PM (LOCAL) 5PM (AEST)  
 REFEREE: BEN WILLIAMS ASSISTANT REFEREES: JOE FUSARI & MATHEW CHEESEMAN

P	G				
3	0	0	0	Frank JURIC (GK)	20
3	0	1	0	Nikolai TOPOR-STANLEY	2
2	0	1	0	David TARKA	3
3	0	0	0	Jamie COYNE (C)	4
2	1	0	0	Adrian TRINIDAD	9
3	0	1	0	AMARAL	10
3	0	0	0	Scott BULLOCH	11
3	0	1	0	Nikita RUKAVYTSYA	13
3	3	0	0	Eugene DADI	14
3	0	2	0	Adriano PELLEGRINO	16
2	0	0	0	Mark LEE	21

#### SUBS

0	0	0	0	Jason PETKOVIC (GK)	1
1	0	0	0	Jamie HARNWELL	5
2	0	0	0	Nick RIZZO	7
0	0	0	0	Naum SEKULOVSKI	8

#### REST OF SQUAD

8. James ROBINSON, 12. Josip MAGDIC, 17. James DOWNEY, 18. Hayden FOXE, 19. Naum SEKULOVSKI, 22. Wayne SRHOJ, 30. Tando VELAPHI

#### COACH

Dave MITCHELL

P	G				
1	0	1	0	Liam REDDY (GK)	
3	0	0	0	Luke DEVERE	
4	0	1	0	Craig MOORE (C)	
7	0	1	0	Michael ZULLO	
8	0	0	0	Massimo MURDOCCA	
9	1	0	0	Serginho VAN DIJK	
10	3	0	0	Charlie MILLER	
11	3	0	0	REINALDO	
15	0	1	0	Matt McKAY	
16	0	0	0	Hyuk-Su SEO	
18	0	1	0	Danny TIATTO	

#### SUBS

20	0	0	0	Griffin MCMASTER (GK)	
2	1	0	0	Andrew PACKER	
12	1	0	0	Tahj MINNIECON	
22	1	0	0	Robbie KRUSE	

#### REST OF SQUAD

5. Josh McCLOUGHAN, David DODD, 13. Chris GROSSMAN, 17. Mitch NICHOLS, 19. Isaka CERNAK, 21. Tommy OAR, 23. Tim SMITS

#### COACH

Frank FARINA

### SEASON 2008/09 OVERVIEW

League position: 5th  
 Played: 3  
 Won: 0  
 Drawn: 2  
 Lost: 1  
 Goals For: 4  
 Goals Against: 6  
 Leading goal scorer:  
 Charlie Miller, 3  
 Shots on goal: 14.7  
 Fouls conceded: 13.3  
 Tackles: 28  
 Effective tackles: 70%  
 Passes complete: 323.7  
 Passing accuracy: 76.9%  
 Crosses: 6.7  
 Corners: 6.3  
 Goalkeeper saves: 0.7

#### HEAD-TO-HEAD

Played, W, L, D: 9, 6, 1, 2  
 Leading goalscorer:  
 Lynch, 3  
 Goals scored: 18  
 Last season: W 4-1

#### ODDS

\$2.55 win  
 \$3.30 draw

\*Odds courtesy of TAB Sportsbet

#### ON TARGET

#### OFF TARGET

#### CORNERS

#### FOULS

\*Team lists are subject to change

HALF-TIME

FULL-TIME

#### ON TARGET

#### OFF TARGET

#### CORNERS

#### FOULS

### COMING UP

ROUND 5: WELLINGTON PHOENIX, MEMBERS EQUITY  
 ROUND 6: CC MARINERS, BLUETONGUE STADIUM

### COMING UP

ROUND 5: NEWC JETS, SUNCORP STADIUM  
 ROUND 6: MELB VICTORY, TELSTRA STADIUM

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## ADELAIDE UNITED

### YOUTH TEAM TAKES SHAPE

ADELAIDE UNITED HAVE named four more players to join their inaugural National Youth League (NYL) squad.

Youth coach Joe Mullen has selected local talent Andrew Ciarla, Michael Doyle, Osama Malik and Francesco Monterosso to take his squad to eight players. (Read more about Malik on p39.)

Ciarla, 17, was picked after an impressive run for Adelaide Super League side MetroStars, as well as impressing during his trial games with United.

Doyle has spent the previous two years with Adelaide Galaxy, and the committed United fan can't wait for his opportunity to pull on the red short.

"I've had season tickets to Adelaide United for the past couple of years and when I'm there watching I just think about what it would be like to be out on the field," Doyle said. "Getting selected in the Youth League squad, you feel like you're one step away. It was a lot of hard working getting in there so now I just have to try and stay there."

Striker Monterosso, a product of the South Australian Sports Institute football program, is looking to follow in the footsteps of one of his heroes. "Paul Agostino grew up here and then went overseas and played in some of the top leagues, which is something I would like to do in the future."



### REDS START NEW COACHING CAREER

#### FORMER QANTAS SOCCEROO

star Tony Vidmar has joined brother Aurelio at Adelaide United's coaching staff as Reds' development coach.

Vidmar will work primarily with Adelaide United's Youth Team Coach Joe Mullen, helping to develop and nurture the club's young talent for the National Youth League, but he will also spend time with The Reds' first team.

"I'll probably be working a little bit with Aurelio. We played so many years together and we've both got a professional outlook on the game and nothing really changes," Tony said.

"It's definitely something I wanted to do. I spent close to 15 years in Europe and played under quite a few good coaches so I've learnt a lot from them and hopefully I can pass that onto the younger boys."



## CENTRAL COAST

### ROCHE APPOINTED WESTFIELD W-LEAGUE COACH

CENTRAL COAST MARINERS have taken the first step towards setting up their inaugural Westfield W-League team with the announcement of Stephen Roche as coach of the club's women's team. The W-League kicks off in late October (see p43 for more on the upcoming Westfield W-League) and 41-year-old Roche can't wait to get started.

"I am absolutely delighted about my forthcoming duties with the Central Coast Mariners in the Westfield W-League," says Roche.

"It is important that we assemble a competitive squad, which will in turn generate bigger crowds and public interest as the competition evolves.

"It's the biggest step you could possibly take as a coach – being part of Australia's elite women's competition," he continues.

"It's all about building a solid foundation with the squad and getting the best out of the team in what will be an exciting year for the women's game."

### MARINERS LOOK TO GRASSROOTS

CENTRAL COAST MARINERS have announced the launch of the club's very own youth Academy, a first for any Hyundai A-League club.

The Mariners Academy will offer players from the age of 8 the chance to develop their skills, as the club looks to encourage the passage of young players into its NYL squad.

Five centres in the Central Coast area will work with groups of 16 players at U-9, U-10, U-11, U-12, U-13 and U-14 age levels, with each group training twice weekly over 12 weeks pre- and post-Christmas. "The Mariners Academy

is a cornerstone element of our ambition to become the centre of excellence for football in Australia," said club Executive Chairman Lyall Gorman.

The inaugural Mariners Academy will kick off on Sunday, 19 October to coincide with the Mariners' Hyundai A-League 2008/09 round eight match at Bluetongue Stadium against the Wellington Phoenix.

"The guarantee of the Mariners Academy is that we will always be working to ensure that the environment we create is the right one for players to develop their game and to grow as positive young people," said Mariners Academy Coaching & Development Manager Tony Walmsley.

For more details on how to apply go to [www.ccm Mariners.com.au](http://www.ccm Mariners.com.au).



## MELBOURNE VICTORY

### VICTORY'S YOUNG TALENT TIME

YOUNG MELBOURNE FOOTBALLERS could be spending one afternoon with two of their footballing heroes. Melbourne Victory are giving 20 local metropolitan junior football clubs the chance to win the ultimate training session.

Two first-team Victory players will attend the session and give the young players the chance to learn from some of the Hyundai A-League's best players, who will put them through selected training drills designed for young players.

The club aim to encourage local club's participation in the game and build a relationship with the Melbourne football community.

Team Managers are encouraged to register their interest via email to [aglossop@mvfc.com.au](mailto:aglossop@mvfc.com.au) (one entry per team). Applications close Monday 15th September. See [www.mvfc.com.au](http://www.mvfc.com.au) for more information.

### WAITING ON THWAITE

The squad for Melbourne Victory's game against Adelaide United at Telstra Dome on Friday night remains unclear with Michael Thwaite and Nick Ward rated as 50/50 chances to make the match-day squad.

New signing Thwaite is still recovering from an ankle injury he suffered in the 5-0 thrashing of Newcastle Jets in round three. The big Soccerroo defender has enjoyed a great start to the season and looks set to become a key part of Victory's title assault. Coach Ernie Merrick is waiting until nearer the weekend before making a final decision.

Ward is still in doubt after missing all the Melbourne opening three games of the season. The attacking midfielder has been suffering the effects of a calf injury and has been unavailable for selection. Melbourne's strength in depth meant Merrick was able to rest the 23-year-old for the game against the Jets, a long-term view that will no doubt pay dividends as the season progresses.



## WELLINGTON PHOENIX

### BACK WITH A BANG

AFTER A NIGHTMARE start to the season, Wellington Phoenix coach Ricki Herbert is hoping his team can finally make their mark on the Hyundai A-League season 2008/09 with a result against Central Coast Mariners this coming weekend.

Phoenix have enjoyed a number of home games to start the new campaign but have performed "garbage" according to captain Andrew Durante.

The international break gave Herbert the chance to rebuild the confidence of his battered squad.

"It's a good chance for us to reflect on things and to turn our attention back to what we were doing before (in the 2008 Pre-Season Cup competition)," Herbert says.

"(The Adelaide game) was really disappointing. We were absolutely not at the level we needed to be and we need to take a long, hard look at ourselves right across the board. We were flat throughout and no one made a contribution from a 60-, 70- or 80-minute point of view.

"These times can be important for everybody and everyone has to be on the same page. Work-rate, energy, enthusiasm – that's what needs to be shown by everybody."





## GLORY FINALISE YOUTH SQUAD

**PERTH GLORY HAVE** gone one better than their Hyundai A-League rivals by finalising their National Youth League (NYL) team.

With the NYL set to kick off in just two weeks, some clubs are still to confirm their playing roster – but Glory youth coach Gareth Naven, a former club captain, has worked hard the past four months to get his squad together in time to get them training together properly before the season starts.

"It's a great opportunity for the players," Naven said. "We had a huge response during trials and the young men we have selected are exceptionally talented footballers who have been given this wonderful opportunity and we'll give them every chance to make the most of that."

"It is everyone's hope that this group of players will be the next generation for Perth Glory," he said.

Glory's NYL squad includes three players from the elite National Training Centre (NTC) program based at the WA Institute of Sport, one returning from the AIS while the others represent the talent spread across the West State League clubs.



## GLORY FOR PERTH WOMEN

**IN ANOTHER EARLY** move, Perth Glory have also announced Nicola Williams as the coach of their inaugural Westfield W-League team coach.

Williams is the current National Training Centre (NTC) and WA State U-17's girls coach and has signed a one-year agreement to lead Western Australia's newest national team.

The 26-year-old is hungry to get started with her new team and believes the competition will be a massive boost for the women's game in Australia. "I am extremely excited about this opportunity," Williams said.

"The Westfield W-League is definitely a step forward for the women's game in WA and also at a national level."

"There are now many more opportunities and pathways for our players to succeed and perform at a high level without having to leave Australia, and this can only be a great thing for our game."

"I am confident that we will be able to assemble a very competitive squad ready for kick-off" said Williams.



## PUSHING FORWARD

**ONE ROAR YOUNGSTER** is looking forward to a bright start to his football career. Highly rated Tommy Oar recently earned a call-up from Australian Under-20 coach Jan Versleijen to travel with the team to Japan.

Oar started in all three of Young Socceroos matches in the Shizuoka Broadcasting System Cup, and impressed the new Dutch coach during the tour.

The 16-year-old left winger, the youngest in the Queensland Roar first team, was happy to take plenty from the international experience, and playing under Versleijen. "It was my first Aussie tour so I was pretty proud and it's my highest achievement so far," Oar said. "It's exposed me to some good players and given me more experience which is helping me when I come back and train here so it's good."



## ROAR FIRST YOUTH BLOW

**QUEENSLAND ROAR NATIONAL** Youth League team has been hit hard by the news that goalkeeper Luke Muir will be ruled out of competing for up to four months.

The 18-year-old fractured his wrist in training and looks set to miss the majority of the 2008/09 National Youth League season, which kicks off in just a couple of weeks.

Despite the bad news, Muir said he had already learnt a great deal during his time training with Roar.

"I already feel like I've improved," Muir said. "I've learnt a lot from (Liam Reddy and Griffin McMaster) and I'm

also picking up stuff from the field players too."

"Fernando (vaz Alves, goalkeeping coach) is probably one of the best coaches I've had. Every day I'm learning something new. It's really good here and I'm enjoying it."

Roar Youth coach Rado Vidosic was disappointed but said the Magic United keeper would remain involved with the NYL team.

"I know that Fernando will be very disappointed because he believed in Luke to be able to step up and deliver at this level as well," Vidosic said. "But that's football and what can you do? The door shuts for someone and it opens up for someone else."

## ALLEN SIGNS ON

**SYDNEY FC HAS** taken the first step in organising their team for the Westfield W-League with the appointment of Young Matildas coach Alen Stajcic as women's coach.

Stajcic has good background in women's football and apart from his involvement in the national program, has been in charge of the New South Wales Institute of Sport's women's squad for the last seven years, and he's excited about the growth he's seeing in the game.

The 34-year-old is understandably excited by the potential the new league represents for the women's game. "I can't

even express how important this is in the pathway and development of the profile of women's football," he said.

"Hopefully, like the A-League with the men, it'll add that extra piece in the puzzle to give the players the preparation they need, and also the incentive for the next generation to play at a higher level."

Sydney are cycling a long list of New South Wales based players, including Matilda Heather Garriock.

"I think we'll be one of the contenders to take it out, we've definitely got a strong presence of Matildas in there," said Stajcic. "It'll definitely be between us and Queensland I feel, but Perth isn't bad and Central Coast will be OK as well so it won't be an easy competition."

## SYDNEY MAKE SHARP SIGNING

**SYDNEY FC HAVE** turned to some UK expertise to maximise their ambitions to make the club the biggest in Australia.

New chief commercial officer Ken Sharp has spent the past seven years working with English clubs, including Derby County and Coventry, and is looking forward to making the most of his new role with the Hyundai A-League glamour club.

"We should be filling this stadium," he said of the SFS. "It's going to take two-to-three years to do that, but I have no doubt we should be able to."

"I am very excited to be here," he said. "It's a terrific atmosphere, there's a definite high energy and a lot of ambition here."

"There is a lot of appeal about Australia, with a lot of the clubs saying that we must do a friendly and that they would bring the team down here," he said. "With some of the links that have now been created, hopefully we can bring that to pass."



## JETS GET THEIR KART ON

**NEWCASTLE JETS COACH** Gary Van Egmond opted to give his under-fire squad a break earlier this week, taking his men out go-karting in the build-up to their clash against Sydney FC.

After a disappointing start to the season, Van Egmond has been pushing his team hard to turn their form and results around but this week the coach decided a bit of light relief was the best option ahead of the match at EnergyAustralia Stadium this Saturday.

But the break didn't stop "Dutchy" giving his players a blast after the shocking result against Melbourne Victory in round three.

"It's good to talk about it, it's good to identify things, to give the players information and knowledge, but it's the response that we're after. It's all well and good to be talking about 'this is what we should have done' or 'this is how mentally I should have approached the game' but it's the response that's really the important part of it."

"Training has definitely been sharp, the effort has been fantastic but the effort was good before the Melbourne game as well. So it depends how the response is against Sydney FC on Saturday night," Van Egmond said.

## GOALS FOR GRASSROOTS 2008/09

**ONE LOCAL NEWCASTLE** football club were grateful recipients of a hefty cheque from Hyundai Motor Company Australia recently.

Maitland Junior Football club was selected by the Jets as the recipient of the Hyundai's "Goals for Grassroots" program, the A-League sponsors' commitment to grassroots football within local communities.

"It's fantastic to see a company like Hyundai getting behind grassroots football in our area."

"Their support for the game on this level is very encouraging for all involved with football," said Evelyn Stonham of the Maitland Junior Football Club.

Jets captain Jade North said of the great prize, "These kids are part of the future for football in Newcastle and surrounding areas and the Hyundai Goals for Grassroots program is a great way to ensure that that future is being looked after."

For more information on this initiative, go to [www.ilovefootball.com.au](http://www.ilovefootball.com.au) and submit why your local grassroots club should receive this great support. Good luck!



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# HYUNDAI A-LEAGUE SEASON DRAW 2009

## Round 1

Newcastle Jets v Central Coast Mariners  
Sydney FC v Melbourne Victory  
Wellington Phoenix v Queensland Roar  
Adelaide United v Perth Glory

## Round 2

Perth Glory v Newcastle Jets  
Central Coast Mariners v Sydney FC  
Wellington Phoenix v Melbourne Victory  
Queensland Roar v Adelaide United

## Round 3

Melbourne Victory v Newcastle Jets  
Adelaide United v Wellington Phoenix  
Sydney FC v Perth Glory  
Queensland Roar v Central Coast Mariners

## Round 4

Melbourne Victory v Adelaide United  
Newcastle Jets v Sydney FC  
Wellington Phoenix v Central Coast Mariners  
Perth Glory v Queensland Roar

## Round 5

Queensland Roar v Newcastle Jets  
Sydney FC v Adelaide United  
Central Coast Mariners v Melbourne Victory  
Perth Glory v Wellington Phoenix

## Round 6

Central Coast Mariners v Perth Glory  
Adelaide United v Newcastle Jets  
Wellington Phoenix v Sydney FC  
Melbourne Victory v Queensland Roar

## Round 7

Adelaide United v Central Coast Mariners  
Melbourne Victory v Perth Glory  
Sydney FC v Queensland Roar  
Newcastle Jets v Wellington Phoenix

## Round 8

Queensland Roar v Adelaide United Suncorp Stadium  
Newcastle Jets v Melbourne Victory  
Central Coast Mariners v Wellington Phoenix  
Perth Glory v Sydney FC

## Round 9

Central Coast Mariners v Newcastle Jets  
Melbourne Victory v Sydney FC  
Wellington Phoenix v Queensland Roar  
Adelaide United v Perth Glory

## Round 10

Adelaide United v Melbourne Victory  
Sydney FC v Central Coast Mariners  
Newcastle Jets v Queensland Roar  
Perth Glory v Wellington Phoenix

## Round 11

Sydney FC v Wellington Phoenix  
Central Coast Mariners v Adelaide United  
Queensland Roar v Melbourne Victory  
Perth Glory v Newcastle Jets

## Round 12

Melbourne Victory v Central Coast Mariners

## 15-17 August

EnergyAustralia Stadium 1-1  
Sydney Football Stadium 0-0  
Westpac Stadium 1-1  
Hindmarsh Stadium 1-0

## 22-24 August

Members Equity Stadium 3-3  
Bluetongue Stadium 2-3  
Westpac Stadium 2-4  
Suncorp Stadium 1-1

## 29-31 August

Telstra Dome 5-0  
Hindmarsh Stadium 3-0  
Sydney Football Stadium 5-2  
Suncorp Stadium 2-4

## 12-14 September

Telstra Dome  
EnergyAustralia Stadium  
Westpac Stadium  
Members Equity Stadium

## 19-21 September

Suncorp Stadium  
Sydney Football Stadium  
Bluetongue Stadium  
Members Equity Stadium

## 26-28 September

Bluetongue Stadium  
Hindmarsh Stadium  
Westpac Stadium  
Telstra Dome

## 3-6 October

Hindmarsh Stadium  
Telstra Dome  
Sydney Football Stadium  
EnergyAustralia Stadium

## 17-19 October

EnergyAustralia Stadium  
Bluetongue Stadium  
Members Equity Stadium

## 24-26 October

Bluetongue Stadium  
Telstra Dome  
Westpac Stadium  
Hindmarsh Stadium

## 31 Oct-2 Nov

Hindmarsh Stadium  
Sydney Football Stadium  
EnergyAustralia Stadium  
Members Equity Stadium

## 7-9 November

Sydney Football Stadium  
Bluetongue Stadium  
Suncorp Stadium  
Members Equity Stadium

## 21-23 November

Telstra Dome

Adelaide United v Sydney FC  
Wellington Phoenix v Newcastle Jets  
Queensland Roar v Perth Glory

## Round 13

Wellington Phoenix v Melbourne Victory  
Sydney FC v Queensland Roar  
Perth Glory v Central Coast Mariners  
Newcastle Jets v Adelaide United

## Round 14

Adelaide United v Wellington Phoenix  
Central Coast Mariners v Queensland Roar  
Perth Glory v Melbourne Victory  
Newcastle Jets v Sydney FC

## Round 15

Melbourne Victory v Adelaide United  
Wellington Phoenix v Perth Glory  
Central Coast Mariners v Sydney FC  
Queensland Roar v Newcastle Jets

## Round 16

Wellington Phoenix v Central Coast Mariners  
Newcastle Jets v Melbourne Victory  
Adelaide United v Queensland Roar  
Sydney FC v Perth Glory

## Round 17

Newcastle Jets v Central Coast Mariners  
Perth Glory v Adelaide United  
Melbourne Victory v Sydney FC  
Queensland Roar v Wellington Phoenix

## Round 18

Central Coast Mariners v Perth Glory  
Melbourne Victory v Queensland Roar  
Adelaide United v Sydney FC  
Wellington Phoenix v Newcastle Jets

## Round 19

Adelaide United v Newcastle Jets  
Central Coast Mariners v Queensland Roar  
Sydney FC v Wellington Phoenix  
Perth Glory v Melbourne Victory

## Round 20

Melbourne Victory v Central Coast Mariners  
Queensland Roar v Sydney FC  
Wellington Phoenix v Adelaide United  
Newcastle Jets v Perth Glory

## Round 21

Melbourne Victory v Wellington Phoenix  
Queensland Roar v Perth Glory  
Sydney FC v Newcastle Jets  
Central Coast Mariners v Adelaide United

## Semi Final 1st Leg

TBA

## Semi Final 2nd Leg

TBA

## Preliminary Final

TBA

## Grand Final

TBA

Hindmarsh Stadium  
Westpac Stadium  
Suncorp Stadium

## 28-30 November

Westpac Stadium  
Sydney Football Stadium  
Members Equity Stadium  
EnergyAustralia Stadium

## 5-7 December

Hindmarsh Stadium  
Bluetongue Stadium  
Members Equity Stadium  
EnergyAustralia Stadium

## 12-14 December

Telstra Dome  
Westpac Stadium  
Bluetongue Stadium  
Suncorp Stadium

## 19-21 December

Westpac Stadium  
EnergyAustralia Stadium  
Hindmarsh Stadium  
Sydney Football Stadium

## 26-28 December

EnergyAustralia Stadium  
Members Equity Stadium  
Telstra Dome  
Suncorp Stadium

## 31 Dec-4 Jan

Bluetongue Stadium  
Telstra Dome  
Adelaide Oval  
Westpac Stadium

## 9-11 January

Hindmarsh Stadium  
Bluetongue Stadium  
Sydney Football Stadium  
Members Equity Stadium

## 16-18 January

Telstra Dome  
Suncorp Stadium  
Westpac Stadium  
EnergyAustralia Stadium

## 23-25 January

Telstra Dome  
Suncorp Stadium  
Sydney Football Stadium  
Bluetongue Stadium

## 30 January-1 February

## 13-15 February

## 21 February

## 28-February



## TOP 10s

### SHOTS ON/OFF GOAL BY PLAYER

DANIEL ALLSOPP (VICTORY)	9	3	75.0
SERGINHO VAN DIJK (ROAR)	7	5	58.3
MATTHEW SIMON (MARINERS)	6	2	75.0
STEVE CORICA (SYDNEY)	5	1	83.3
CHARLIE MILLER (ROAR)	5	1	83.3
JOEL GRIFFITHS (JETS)	5	2	71.4
NEY FABIANO (VICTORY)	5	3	62.5
EUGENE DADI (GLORY)	4	4	50.0
ADRIAN CACERES (MARINERS)	3	0	100.0
JOHN HUTCHINSON (MARINERS)	3	1	75.0

### GOAL ASSISTS BY PLAYER

ALEX BROSQUE (SYDNEY)	4
AMARAL (GLORY)	2
PEDJ BOJIC (MARINERS)	2
NEY FABIANO (VICTORY)	2
ARCHIE THOMPSON (VICTORY)	2
SERGINHO VAN DIJK (ROAR)	2
ALEMAO (ADELAIDE)	1
DANIEL ALLSOPP (VICTORY)	1
NIGEL BOOGAARD (MARINERS)	1
MARK BRIDGE (SYDNEY)	1

### FOULS CONCEDED BY PLAYER

SASHO PETROVSKI (MARINERS)	12
CRISTIANO (ADELAIDE)	11



MICHAEL FERRANTE (PHOENIX)	11
TERRY MCFLYNN (SYDNEY)	11
JOBE WHEELHOUSE (JETS)	11
AMARAL (GLORY)	10
MATT MCKAY (ROAR)	9
NEY FABIANO (VICTORY)	8
DANIEL ALLSOPP (VICTORY)	7
ANDREW CLARK (MARINERS)	7

### KEEPER SAVES BY PLAYER

CLINT BOLTON (SYDNEY)	19
ANTE COVIC (JETS)	14
EUGENE GALEKOVIC (ADELAIDE)	13
FRANK JURIC (GLORY)	10
GLEN MOSS (PHOENIX)	8
MITCHELL LANGERAK (VICTORY)	3
MICHAEL THEOKLITOS (VICTORY)	3
DANIEL VUKOVIC (MARINERS)	3
MARK BOSNICH (MARINERS)	2
LIAM REDDY (ROAR)	2

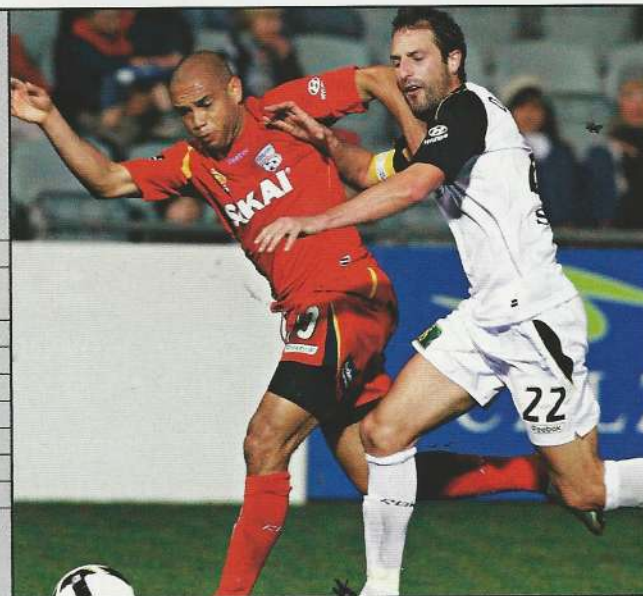
### TACKLES MADE BY PLAYER

BRADLEY PORTER (MARINERS)	19
ADAM D'APUZZO (JETS)	18
SHANNON COLE (SYDNEY)	17
ROBBIE MIDDLEBY (SYDNEY)	17
TERRY MCFLYNN (SYDNEY)	16
TAREK ELRICH (JETS)	15
MATT MCKAY (ROAR)	15



MELBOURNE VICTORY FC	VERSUS	NEWCASTLE JETS FC
CARLOS HERNANDEZ 40M		
ARCHIE THOMPSON 45 + 2M		
DANNY ALLSOPP 60M		
DANNY ALLSOPP 64M		
GRANT BREBNER 90 + 1M		
GOALS		
		TAREK ELRICH 22M
		JESPER HAKANSSON 69M
		JOBE WHEELHOUSE 73M
YELLOW CARDS		
RED CARDS		
SHOTS ON GOAL	3	
FOULS CONCEDED	23	
TACKLES	35	
EFFECTIVE TACKLES	64%	
PASSES COMPLETE	227	
PASSING ACCURACY	71%	
CROSSES	12	
CORNERS	7	
GOAL KEEPER SAVES	6	

ADELAIDE UNITED FC	VERSUS	WELLINGTON PHOENIX FC
LUCAS PANTELIS 15M		
CRISTIANO 48M		
CRISTIANO 60M		
GOALS		
		DAVID MULLIGAN 34M
		LEILEI GAO 40M
YELLOW CARDS		
RED CARDS		
SHOTS ON GOAL	5	
FOULS CONCEDED	17	
TACKLES	22	
EFFECTIVE TACKLES	56%	
PASSES COMPLETE	382	
PASSING ACCURACY	82%	
CROSSES	20	
CORNERS	5	
GOAL KEEPER SAVES	5	





DANNY TIATTO (ROAR)	15
PEDJ BOJIC (MARINERS)	13
JAMIE COYNE (GLORY)	13 »

#### COMPLETED PASSES BY PLAYER

PAUL REID (ADELAIDE)	150
MATT MCKAY (ROAR)	139
DANNY TIATTO (ROAR)	127
JOBE WHEELHOUSE (JETS)	110
JOSE LUIS LOPEZ (VICTORY)	109
MICHAEL FERRANTE (PHOENIX)	108
JAMIE COYNE (GLORY)	106
MASSIMO MURDOCCA (ROAR)	106
TERRY MCFLYNN (SYDNEY)	103
SCOTT JAMIESON (ADELAIDE)	100



#### SYDNEY FC

ALEX BROSQUE 2M
STEVE CORICA PEN 21M
MARK BRIDGE 39M
SHANNON COLE 43M
NIKOLAI TOPOR-STANLEY OWN GOAL 88M

#### VERSUS

#### PERTH GLORY FC



EUGENE DADI 12M
EUGENE DADI PEN 67M

#### GOALS

ADRIANO PELLEGRINO 20M
DINO DJULBIC 20M
AMARAL 86M
DINO DJULBIC 20M

#### YELLOW CARDS

#### RED CARDS

#### SHOTS ON GOAL

#### FOULS CONCEDED

#### TACKLES

#### EFFECTIVE TACKLES

#### PASSES COMPLETE

#### PASSING ACCURACY

#### CROSSES

#### CORNERS

#### GOAL KEEPER SAVES

9

12

21

62%

406

84%

18

6

3

5

17

20

57%

234

80%

18

2

4



#### QUEENSLAND ROAR FC

CHARLIE MILLER 69M
SERGINHO VAN DIJK PEN 73M

#### VERSUS

#### CENTRAL COAST MARINERS FC



MATTHEW SIMON 31M
MILE JEDINAK 48M
DYLAN MACALLISTER 64M
DYLAN MACALLISTER 71M
MATTHEW SIMON 15M
MILE JEDINAK 18M
ANDREW CLARK 77M
DYLAN MACALLISTER 78M

#### GOALS

#### YELLOW CARDS

#### RED CARDS

#### SHOTS ON GOAL

#### FOULS CONCEDED

#### TACKLES

#### EFFECTIVE TACKLES

#### PASSES COMPLETE

#### PASSING ACCURACY

#### CROSSES

#### CORNERS

#### GOAL KEEPER SAVES

5

9

33

63%

309

77%

22

3

1

6

19

41

73%

188

71%

10

4

2





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**SEPT 18**



# RED FEVER

Adelaide United's youth team is taking shape, and local lad **OSAMA MALIK** is out to bring something different to the team

WORDS Rob Dalglish

**A**S the countdown to the National Youth League kick-off continues, Adelaide United have wasted no time signing up plenty of local talent to their inaugural squad.

One of the latest is highly rated Adelaide 17-year-old midfielder Osama Malik, regarded as one of the brightest young talents in the country.

Malik's family originally hail from Sudan but Adelaide born and bred, the youngster was spotted by United youth coach Joe Mullen while playing for one of Mullen's former clubs, Croydon Kings. Invited to trial for the youth team, Malik was quickly signed up to the Reds' squad.

"Trials started at the beginning of June and there were 40-50 kids trialling when I went up," Malik says. "I got a phone call asking if I'd like to try out and that was it."

According to Mullen, Malik is a very talented individual who can bring something a bit special to his new team.

"He's a good boy, technically very good. He's keen to learn and work and he's got that little bit of something you don't expect that'll happen sometime throughout the game.

"He's the old Glenn Hoddle type. He can look like he's just going through the motions, but he's got the silky touch, is technically sound and he can change a game. He lumbers around a bit like Hoddle as well."

Having such a player is a blessing for any team, especially if they are as versatile as Malik.

"He can play anywhere in midfield. He can play out wide or with three, left up the top or wide right at the top. He's not stereotyped to a particular position which is a bonus for him. I'll probably start using him in a left-midfield role."

But, as with many players of that style, Mullen notes the skilful youngster can disappear in a game.

"He knocked a team out of the finals with a piece of individual brilliance – but I've got to say, the rest of the game he did nothing.

"He's got to work harder. I've talked to him about it. He's been able to get away with it at the level he's

been playing. But at this Youth League level, and in the A-League, he won't be able to get away with it."

For Malik the target for this season is simple.

"(The aim) is to get a starting position in the youth squad and who knows from there. Hopefully in a couple of years' time I can break into the A-League team."

This is in line with Mullen's vision of using the youth team as a breeding ground for future Adelaide players.


"My view, and I've talked at length with Aurelio Vidmar about this, is I want to be in a position by the end of year one or year two having at least one or two of these boys pressing for an A-League contract. My primary objective is to get these boys through in a couple of years to fill the (first-team) squad with some local players. And all my boys will be local players."

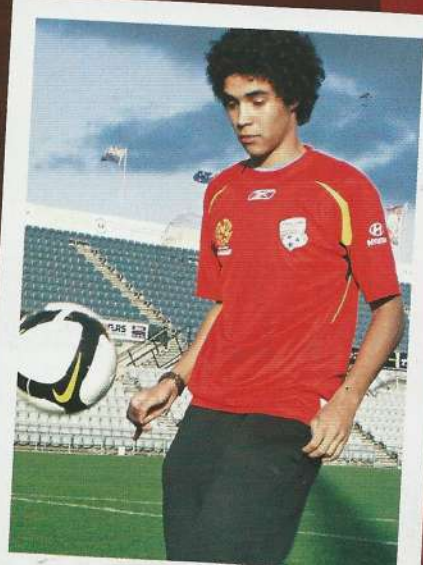
Malik may be a local boy at heart, but like any player he's already dreaming of the big time – although it's not just the same old story.

"My goal is to play in Europe. I'd probably say Portsmouth in the English Premier League. I love 'em. I love Harry Redknapp and the players he's signed up."

So he's not one of those Manchester United glory hunters?

"Nah, that's what I don't like."

That's what we like to hear. 



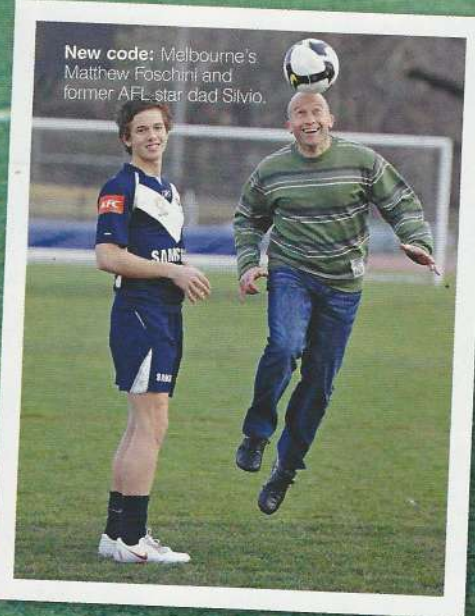




**Ambition:** Adelaide's Michael Marrone.



**Bright future:** Roar's Adam Sarota with Frank Farina.



**New code:** Melbourne's Matthew Foschini and former AFL star dad Silvio.

# YOUNG ENDEAVOURS

The new National Youth League is set to start in two weeks, but for the clubs and players involved there is still much to be finalised for the first season of the much-anticipated competition.

WORDS Jack Snape

**J**UST six months ago, the most significant announcement for young footballers in Australia was made. As part of the reforms to the game prioritised by the national review last year, the National Youth League (NYL) was to begin in the coming season, with all Australian clubs enjoying representation.

Of the proposed competition, FFA Technical Director Rob Baan said: "For Australia to improve its competitiveness in world football at all levels, our players must be playing competitive matches against quality opponents during this critical development period for young elite sportsmen."

The NYL will concentrate Australia's top young talent into one competition. Instead of replacing these players' institute and state league affiliations, it will supplement their winter season with more games over summer.

It's a boon for the game in Australia, but as the kick-off to the first NYL match approaches (the first match is on September 26), little is known about just how the competition will play out.

To find out, we sought out the coaches of each of the seven clubs to catch up on where preparations are at, and what their expectations are of the NYL.

Down in Victoria, the optimism of Melbourne Victory youth coach Mehmet Durakovic is obvious.

"You get up every day and you've got a smile on your face because there's something there now for these kids that's never been there before," he says. "They've got a wonderful opportunity to go onto bigger and better

things. Having been part of the VIS (Victorian Institute of Sport) for three years, I know the frustrations of these kids where if they don't get picked for the AIS, there's nowhere for them to go. Now there is a pathway and these kids are buzzing."

Though there is no denying the NYL appears ideal in theory, questions remain. The wide 17-21 age eligibility range means slightly younger players may suffer from physical bullying on the pitch. Small squads of 12 (plus four over-age slots) may leave some clubs short when an injury crisis, or Young Socceroos tours, hit. There's also the question of just how easy it will be for these players to gel, given they are amateurs and many currently still have state league finals commitments.

Not even the coaches are fully aware of what to expect.

"It will certainly be trial and error, a bit ad hoc," says Sydney FC's Steve O'Connor. "How it will all pan out will be interesting."

"But I'm certainly expecting all the boys to be keen and looking at the whole thing as an opportunity to take the next step in their football careers."

Since the NYL announcement in March, each of the seven A-League clubs (there is no Phoenix youth league team, due to travel concerns) have been madly preparing for the season. Appointing the coach was the first step, followed by recruitment of players.

Yet with little direction, apart from age and squad size restrictions, the respective coaches were given the flexibility to approach their recruitment the best way they saw fit. Many recognised potential to support the first

team squad by signing older players who could step in if required.

At Queensland Roar, Rado Vidosic has three players 20 or older who will provide balance to the club's already youthful A-League side.

"We're looking at those two or three players to step up if the first team needs any players from the national youth league, for injured players and replacements and so on," he says.

It's the same situation at Adelaide United, where youngster Michael Marrone is in his last year of eligibility for the NYL, and will in effect be Aurelio Vidmar's fourth choice striker.

"What we've done with him is identified somebody that, if there was an injury in the A-League squad, they were both physically and technically ready to go in as a replacement player," says Adelaide coach Joe Mullen.

With the opportunity to utilise the four over-age player slots, consideration has also been given to what kind of players the NYL coaches can expect to come down from the first team squad and play.

Durakovic has identified these senior players as an important part of his overall development strategy. They will provide experience, but will also be something of a safety net for his squad given that he has brought in as many players who are in the younger age range as possible.

"It's a development system, a youth system, where hopefully they will get a bit of experience from the older boys who will come down, and hopefully if you can



There's something there now for these kids that's never been there before – they've got a wonderful opportunity to go onto bigger and better things. There's a pathway for them and the kids are buzzing.

develop these players within the next couple of years, they'll be hopefully knocking on the door to the seniors. It defeats the purpose if you pick older guys then after a year or two years just letting them go."

However each squad is composed, though, there exists a general consensus of the need to encourage skilful, attacking football.

As Perth Glory coach Gareth Naven says, "We need to give players an open book to feel free express themselves on the field, and make it entertaining for the people who have come to see good football."

What role then do rides and trophies have in the eyes of the coaches?

"Of course, everyone wants to win. Winning is nice, but it's a youth competition that's there for development more than it is for winning grand finals," declares Newcastle Jets coach Craig Deans. "I think, though, if we get one player from the youth league team each year that gets an A-League contract, that's more important in a lot of ways than winning the competition."

The amateur status of the NYL players means study and work commitments prevent the youth squad from keeping the same routine as the first team. Most clubs will run NYL-exclusive sessions to fit in with the players' schedules. Yet each maintain the importance of having as much exposure to the first team as possible.

"We'll be training separately but now and then Ernie (Merrick) will bring a few of the boys in to get a bit of a taste of the A-League," says Melbourne's Durakovic.

"It gives the kids an incentive to go on to bigger and better things."

In Queensland, though, Rado Vidosic is pleased to see his side has made some sacrifices to maximise the NYL opportunities they will be given. Many of his squad will be taking time off work, or other commitments, to ensure their training sessions are as valuable as possible.

"Our NYL boys will train with the senior squad to give them more quality training sessions, not to be 10 or 12 people away pushed to the side. We want them to be able to step up if they're needed, and so they know they're part of the big picture."

"The ones that are over 18 have finished school, and they decided to take several months off work, to just try to concentrate on football. Some of their holidays are coming round, so they have that time off anyway."

"It's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to see if you are good enough at that level, so some of them took that opportunity. And for the grade 12ers, school finishes in November."

Whatever benefit the players receive from training however, at the end of the day, it's all about the game.

## NYL WHO'S WHO

### ADELAIDE UNITED

**Coach:** Joe Mullen

NSL legend with Adelaide City and current South Australian state coach.

**Player to watch:** Michael Marrone

In his last year of eligibility, AIS graduate Marrone has been described by Mullen as "just about ready" for the step up to A-League.

### CENTRAL COAST MARINERS

**Coach:** Alex Tobin

The Australian football icon with 87 Socceroos caps is assisted by ex-Mariner Damien Brown.

**Player to watch:** Brady Smith

This local product hoping to prove the Central Coast is capable of producing elite young talent.

### MELBOURNE VICTORY

**Coach:** Mehmet Durakovic

The former Australian international defender is to be assisted by Victory keeper coach Steve Mautone.

**Player to watch:** Fabio DiLizia

One of the NYL's top young talents, defender Fabio is captain of Australia's under-17s.

### NEWCASTLE JETS

**Coach:** Craig Deans

Recently retired Jets player Deans is the NYL's youngest coach.

**Player to watch:** Marko Jesic

A confident attacking midfielder. "Marko keeps asking me if he can be the captain," Deans says.

### QUEENSLAND ROAR

**Coach:** Rado Vidosic

Farina's assistant and Dario's dad, Vidosic has had huge success with the Roar's youngsters.

**Player to watch:** Adam Sarota

The Roar have already signed him to a three-year A-League contract starting next season.

### PERTH GLORY

**Coach:** Gareth Naven

One of the Glory's NSL stalwarts is creating a boot-room feel out West.

**Player to watch:** Anthony Skorich

A local striker who has already turned out for the full Glory side.

### SYDNEY FC

**Coach:** Steve O'Connor

The former Socceroo was head coach at the AIS for more than a decade.

**Player to watch:** Sam Munro

An Australian Institute of Sport representative who is cousin of Australian surfer Trent Munro.

**Good form:** Perth Glory's Anthony Skorich in action for Western Knights.





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\*\*When tested against a placebo by the NSW Institute of Sport, March 2006. For research abstract please refer to [www.nswis.com.au](http://www.nswis.com.au)





# A NEW BALL GAME

The launch of the Westfield W-League heralds a fresh start for women's football in Australia and a massive investment in women's sport as a whole

■ WORDS Sam Ashton

**F**OOTBALL has never been stronger in Australia. The Hyundai A-League might make all the headlines, but beyond the big stadiums the rest of the country's best players are desperate to show just how strong the talent and depth of competition is.

And key to Football Federation Australia's expansion plans is tapping into the potential of female football players. On October 25, Australia's new W-League kicks off around the country, with women's sides representing each of the Australian A-League clubs, plus a new club in Canberra to take Wellington Phoenix's place as the eighth side.

For professional and casual players across the country, the W-League represents a great step forwards for women's sport and football as a whole, and allows

Australia's best female players to show they can compete at the highest standard.

The competition has already been boosted by Matildas players, who will all return to their states of origin to play for their local clubs. Along with their experience, all clubs are holding trials to unearth the next generation of talent that will make up each team.

The Federal Government also came through on its election promise for a \$32 million investment in the game, part of which will be used to support the W-League, in particular through broadcasting. SBS and ABC are reportedly vying for the TV rights.

To get a snapshot of how the league is coming together and what it means to female football players, AFW spoke to Michael Barnett and Stephen Roche, respective head coaches of Adelaide United and

Central Coast Mariners W-League sides, as well as Matildas goalkeeper Melissa Barbieri.

**How excited are you all to be part of the W-League?**

**Barbieri:** We've got a great new league but no one knows who they're playing for, so it's exciting to find out who's going to be in what team, and I'm definitely looking forward to being part of Melbourne Victory. I'm excited about being in front of a Melbourne crowd, having the shirt on, and doing justice to the Victory name. It's going to be wonderful.

**Barnett:** Everybody really sees this as an opportunity for the local talent to be identified and to showcase their skills on a national level – and that's going to help the national team too.

**Roche:** When the national league closed down a few years ago, people were saying, "OK, what are we ➤



► doing this work for?" but now (the W-League) has come around there's this buzz again. There are 14-year-olds wanting to trial for the W-League. That's fantastic. This is their chance to get out there and show they can play football at the highest standard and get people to come and watch them, and hopefully they'll keep coming.

**It's certainly a massive leap for women's football in Australia...**

**Barbieri:** Definitely. If it can get the media attention and the promotion it deserves, it will do wonders for getting girls to play even more. It's the fastest growing sport, and if we have a place for people to go and watch good quality soccer it will do a lot for the game. Girls who play will get more interested, and want to be better players so they can represent Australia one day.

**Barnett:** You only have to look at some of the women's games in the Olympics recently and see the standard there; the interest in the women's side was just as much as in the men. In the next couple of years the women's game is going to explode and for all the A-League clubs, it's a real opportunity to tap into a new audience.

**Roche:** Exactly. We've got elite female athletes. This is their chance to get out there and show they can do it, showcase it. I've seen the success of netball, the crowd they're getting and the money the girls are getting. There's no reason we can't be as big or bigger with the talent we've got.



Reaching out: Barbieri is bringing her international experience to the W-League.

**Does the success of the revamped netball comp show a change in attitude to women's sport?**

**Barbieri:** Hopefully. The netballers have shown if you run a professional women's league you can get bums on seats and hopefully we can follow them and make a difference to women's sport. Getting our names in the papers and on TV would be great – it makes women's sport about more than just swimmers that win gold at the Olympics.

I'm looking at getting the people who are training for nothing – no remuneration, no sponsorship packages, people who have a family or career in another industry because they're focused on their sport and not getting any repay. I really want to see a lot more in the papers and hopefully we can start building every professional women's league.

I'm just hoping it's a bandwagon we've started and the media will get on it, and encourage the fact that females do play sport and they're quite good at it.

**How important is it to have a big sponsor like Westfield onside?**

**Barbieri:** It's fantastic. Westfield have put in a lot of money to raise the game and just the advertising in their shopping centres alone will give us a huge boost. It's amazing such a big company has looked at us as a good opportunity – and I definitely support their shopping centres.

**Roche:** It's massive. Obviously they're probably putting more in than anybody at the moment. These girls need to thank them by showing what they can do on the field.

**Barnett:** Dead right. The fact Westfield are getting on board and FFA are having the season start now, really speaks volumes about how serious they are about the women's game.

**What's the next step for you as the competition draws closer?**

**Barnett:** We've been running trials for the last two weeks, identifying talent. Matildas coach Tom Sermanni is putting out a pool of about 60 players we can draw from, so we'll be looking at that right now.

Over the next fortnight we'll have a preliminary squad of 25-30 players to start working with, and then we've got seven-eight weeks of preparation before we play the first game.

**Barbieri:** We don't have a team yet so I'm doing my bit to make sure I'm fit and ready. I'm training with about three teams at the moment, including at the Victoria National Training Centre. I've put my foot in everybody's pie to get the best out of everyone and give myself the best preparation. Once we get some names on paper, we can start focusing on passages of play and things like that.

**Roche:** Preparing and seeing where everyone's fitness levels are at will be important, because we've got people all over the place. Working hard until the start of the season, and having a few trial games, will also be important. The girls have to hit the ground running and show what they can do right from the word go. They've got to score goals. They've got to show some flair. They've got to show they can take people on and win and shoot. And they have got it.

Time for action: The new W-League will give players such as Leena Khamis (left) and Cheryl Salisbury (right) the stage to shine.



**“If the Westfield W-League can get the media attention and the promotion it deserves, it will do wonders for getting girls to play even more.”**





A STEP UP

STEPHANIE BRANTZ



# IN THE SHOPPING WINDOW

Exciting times are ahead for the W-League and, as **STEPHANIE BRANTZ** explains, this is the time for girl power to reign supreme and our footballers to show their worth

**"A** woman playing football is like a dog which walks on its hind legs. One is surprised, not that they do it badly but that they are able to do it at all" – Brian Glanville, football writer (1973)

Opinions like this show why women's football around the world has had a long and difficult birth.

The Aussie girls too, have struggled. The disbanding of the WNSL in 2004 forced elite players overseas for regular football. But change is imminent.

When Football Federation Australia (in association with Westfield) announced the October kick-off of a televised national women's league, the Westfield W-League was born.

Even the Federal Government joined the party, pledging funding toward the broadcasting costs.

For a country whose national team ranks 12th in the world, have played at

four Women's World Cups and for whom football is the fastest growing female team sport in Australia (6.3% over the past five years) – the recognition is long overdue.

Among the happy beneficiaries is Matilda's star midfielder Heather Garriock, who will line up for Sydney FC. "It's a dream come true, competing in front of a home crowd – family and friends, it's fantastic," she says.

National skipper Cheryl Salisbury is also pulling on her hometown shirt – that of the Newcastle Jets, is certain of the benefits. "Most of the top nations have a national competition, so imagine what we perhaps could have done at the World Cup if we had a national competition running week-in, week-out."

In particular, it's a boon to the fans now able to see their role models on a regular basis. The likes of Salisbury, Garriock and others such as Lisa Da

Vanna (Perth Glory), whose World Cup performance had her likened to Mia Hamm – the player considered the Pele of the Women's game.

While those signs are positive, season one will raise BIG questions. Is the depth of quality there to sustain eight teams? Will the competition be able to overcome the fan's prejudice (often male) about going to watch women's sport? Is a governing body whose coffers are never bountiful going to find this league financially viable?

The financial question is an important one. The initial funding for the W-League has been poured into the set-up and will not be lining the player's pockets. While there are opportunities for some in the US Womens Pro-League which kicks off in April 2009 (tying in well with the W-League), for most that won't be an option. Though they have never attracted the dizzying

dollars that the men do, the passion of female footballers is undiminished. These girls truly play for the love of the beautiful game. For now, all are relishing the chance of regular Australian-based football.

One man who matches the enthusiasm of the players is Matilda's Coach Tom Sermanni, who sees a national league as an opportunity to raise the women's profile and create career pathways for talented players.

Sermanni says for those on the fringes of national selection, the new league also puts them in a box seat.

"While we are familiar with most of the players involved in the W-League, it's a chance for the ones we don't know much about to say 'look at me' and put their names in the frame."

So girls, forget the baby steps and grab your boots! It's time to hit the ground running! 🏃‍♀️

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# My Team

*Australian Football Weekly* talks to the youngest players of the game to find out about the kids playing football all over the country

**NAME: FINN COLES AGE: 9**

**Club:** North Sydney Bears Under 10 B's.  
**Where's the club based?** North Sydney.  
**Won any trophies yet?** Yes – Man of the match and runners-up at Gala Day a couple of years ago.  
**Position:** Left wing.  
**How many goals have you got?** I've scored seven goals this season... so far.  
**Ever scored a hat-trick?** No, but I have scored two several times.  
**Ever got a red card?** No – that's my Dad's job!  
**What's your favourite thing about football?** Having fun with my teammates and watching the A-League and Premier League on TV.  
**What are you best at on the pitch?** Passing, tricky turns and beating defenders before crossing the ball to the strikers.  
**Who's your favourite player(s)?** Chelsea's Frank Lampard and Sydney FC's Alex Brosque.  
**Who would you most like to emulate?** Cristiano Ronaldo, because he has super skills.  
**Who's your favourite team(s)?** Chelsea and Sydney FC.  
**What sport(s) do you like aside from football?** Cricket

and AFL, but I like football most of all.  
**Where would you like to be five years from now?** I'd like to be playing for Chelsea's youth team.  
**Favourite dinner for after a game?** Sausage sandwich and lemonade.  
**Who's going to win the A-League this year?** Sydney FC.  
**Who's better – Tim Cahill or Harry Kewell?** Tim Cahill, because Harry Kewell doesn't play much.  
**When you get a big money contract what's the first thing you want to buy?** A Ferrari Spider.  
**My favourite football saying is:** "Goal for the Blues."  
**My least favourite player is:** Bayern Munich's French midfielder Frank Ribery.  
**Coach's comment:** "He doesn't like Ribery because he says he doesn't look nice and doesn't like his style of play."  
**My favourite saying on the pitch is:** "Spread out like bread and butter guys."



## COACH SAYS

The North Sydney Bears Under 10 B's had a great season this year. They had a nine-game unbeaten run in the middle of the season and played football like a mini Brazil side at times. Honest!

# Skills: Passing



If you want to be the best on the pitch, you have to get the basics right first. And nothing's as important as passing the ball properly

- 1 Passing is all about keeping possession and moving the ball over the field quickly. Good passing is essential if you want to get into the other team's half or just want to make sure they don't get the ball.
- 2 You should always use the inside of your foot (the sidefoot) for the most accuracy – but it's hard to hit the ball with much power. That's why it's so important to practice playing short passes.
- 3 When the ball's coming to you, you need enough room to swing your kicking foot. Get your non-kicking foot close to the side of the ball, balance using your arms and keep watching the ball.
- 4 When you got to pass, make sure you keep your ankle steady. Hit the centre of the ball with the inside of your foot and try to keep the ball low on the ground – that makes it easier to for your teammates to control it.
- 5 How hard you hit the ball also depends on how far away your teammates are. You will learn this the more games you play, but if you're not sure, just keep practising the short pass until you feel happier playing longer balls.



# Play the game: Starting small

Can't wait to get out on the big pitch for your team? Before you get started, playing in small-sided games can help you learn all the skills you need to be a great footballer

ALL over the world, the very best football players learnt their skills first playing in small-sided games. They might have been playing at their local park or on the streets of Brazil, but playing a game with fewer players can give you the chance to learn the easiest, but most important, rules for being a good footballer.

Most small-sided game start with four or five players on each team, and on a much smaller pitch than usual.

When you don't have so many players, it means you can actually have more time to play with the ball and won't be stuck watching the game at the other end of the pitch.

The more time you spend on the ball, the more you'll know what to do with it. For instance, if you receive the ball but sometimes aren't sure who to pass to next,

if you don't have as many teammates to choose from, you'll learn to spot the best pass and play it quickly.

When there are less players, you will also have more chances to practice shooting, passing, dribbling and tackling. And it doesn't matter what position you start playing in, if there aren't as many players, it means you'll get the chance to play in defence and in attack, and find out which part of the game you enjoy the most.

When you play in different positions, you'll also find out what different players have to think about. If you're in defence, do you try to run past your opposition or pass the ball to your teammate? If you're a striker, should you run straight to the goal or wait for your teammates to help you? Learning these basic tactics will help you, no matter where you play on the field.



## Use your brain: Perfect XI

Can you find the surnames of this football team we've thrown together?

Goalkeeper: Clint **BOLTON**

Defender: Jade **NORTH**

Defender: Pedrag **BOJIC**

Defender: **ALEMAO**

Defender: Andrew **DURANTE**

Midfielder: Billy **CELESKI**

Midfielder: Shaun **ONTONG**

Midfielder: Michael **ZULLO**

Midfielder: Shannon **COLE**

Striker: Jamie **HARNWELL**

Striker: **CRISTIANO**

A	G	A	L	E	M	A	O	D	A	Y
C	O	L	E	V	F	B	O	J	I	C
C	H	C	E	L	E	S	K	I	J	O
I	R	S	B	O	L	T	O	N	C	T
J	N	I	T	U	X	A	I	O	D	W
O	M	L	S	N	T	M	O	R	U	Z
I	M	H	J	T	S	A	E	T	R	U
T	P	N	K	E	I	E	I	H	A	L
O	N	T	O	N	G	A	F	H	N	L
E	A	S	O	G	N	T	N	G	T	O
H	A	R	N	W	E	L	L	O	E	U

# On the field: Drink Up!

Ever got too tired to finish a game? Making sure you drink enough water can help you play your best in the big games

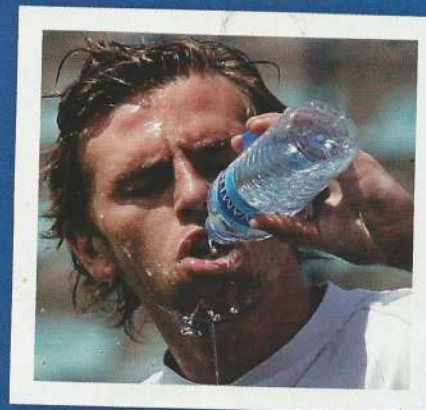
**WHEN** the Qantas Socceroos played their 2010 World Cup qualifier against Qatar, they had to prepare to play in extreme heat. Even in the Aussie summer, playing in the sunshine can take a lot out of your body – as well as your game. The best way to help your body cope with playing when it's hot is to drink the right fluids.

If you're playing football this summer, it's important to drink enough water. Australia's star football players can cover more than 10 kilometres in a game, and if they want to play at their top, they have to stay well hydrated.

When your body is running low on liquid, you can get tired quickly and won't be able to play at your best. If you feel dizzy, have a headache or your legs feel tight and sore, it's important to take a break. Sit in a shady spot and drink cold water until you feel better.

Stay away from fizzy drinks or energy drinks. They'll just make you feel worse when you want to be playing your best – so just stick to the good stuff: water.

The best way to beat dehydration is to make sure you take your own water every time you go to training or play a game. Get your own bottle and take a drink break every 15 minutes. And don't forget a couple of spares for your mates. Making sure every player on your team is properly hydrated is the best way to get the advantage over the opposition.





# Behind every great win is a talented team

FINANCIAL REVIEW  
**smartinvestor**  
BLUE RIBBON AWARDS

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## GETTING BACK TO BASICS

Wellington Phoenix have endured a tough start, but **ADAM KWASNIK** says don't count them out yet

**How are you settling into life in New Zealand?** It's a good set up; the city is quite compact, which makes it a lot easier. There's a good bunch of boys, but we haven't had the best start to the season – everything's been good apart from the performances.

**It's only three games in, but how do you feel the side is progressing?** In all honesty, we've started very poorly – the only way is up. We're rock bottom and can only get better. If you said three weeks ago we'd be bottom of the table right now I would have said that's a load of rubbish, but we've been in poor form and it's simple as that.

**What's been Ricki Herbert's message to the players?** After the Adelaide game, we sat down and had a big chat, and we know we have to pull ourselves together and work hard. We haven't been working as a team the last three weeks.

**Phoenix have a good blend of experience and talent; can you put your finger on why it hasn't worked so far?** We've got a great squad and some really good players, but all of us – as individuals – have been below par. What you put that down to I don't know. Pre-season form was good – it doesn't count for much, but if you get good momentum you assume you'll have a few points on the board, though that's not the case.

**Are you happy with your own performances so far?** Definitely not. I've been poor just like everyone else and we know that. Personally, I've got to work a lot harder and I'm still finding my fitness. I'd love to be banging in the goals and I'd like Phoenix to be winning games, but we've got to take one step at a time.

**Are you looking forward to facing your former club, Central Coast Mariners, this weekend?** It'll be good, I still keep in touch with a few of the boys – they're a great bunch. I had three very successful years at the Mariners. I've moved on now and I'd like to think I've moved on to bigger

and better things, but you've got to work for it. It doesn't just come to you, you've got to work really hard.

**How hard was it to leave Central Coast and head over to Wellington?** It was an extremely hard time – I had family issues that were lingering and it was touch and go. I spoke to my family and decided I needed a fresh start, and Phoenix was the best move. I believe I've made the right move; it mightn't say so on the table at the moment, but those results will come.

**If you fail to defeat the Mariners it'll be three losses from your first three home games; feeling the pressure?**

The pressure has been on from the word go. Even if we win, the pressure's still going to be on. We've just got to concentrate on doing things in a simple fashion and getting back to basics. We've got a good squad, it's just a matter of getting those points on the board, and we hope to start it this week against the Mariners.

**Have your expectations changed after three rounds? Is a top-four berth still in sight?** Definitely. That goes for any team. I know we're bottom of the table, but every team a couple of weeks into the season has expectations of making the top four. We still believe we can achieve that top four position, but it's all about working hard.

**Would this weekend be the ideal time to get your first goal for Phoenix?**

[Laughs.] Definitely, I'd love it to happen, but I don't care who scores the goals as long as Phoenix are winning. It would be nice to score against the old club, though.

**Do you think your old teammates will give you any grief or "special attention" during the game?**

They give me grief off the field, that's for sure, even though I've crossed the Tasman! They'll go about their own game and we have to just worry about our game. Hopefully I can sneak one by and Phoenix will come away with three points. ■



IMAGE: GETTY IMAGES



# THROWING DOWN

It's been a great start to the season for Melbourne Victory, but captain **KEVIN MUSCAT** says his team is ready to take on all comers

■ **WORDS** Thomas Woodgate

**H**E has a reputation for being uncompromising on the pitch, while speaking his mind off it. It's won him his fair share of critics, as well as fans, and one thing's for certain: the Hyundai A-League needs players like Kevin Muscat. If you're looking for a leader on the pitch, he's your man. If you want a sound bite after the game, Muscat's your guy.

So far this season, however, his teammates have been doing all the talking. Muscat hasn't needed to say too much, not that this would usually stop him. An impressive opening to the season has seen Melbourne Victory collect seven points from a possible nine, the most recent win being an impressive 5-0 demolition of last season's premiers, Newcastle Jets.

It's early in the season and the signs are encouraging (as well as ominous to the rest of the league), but Muscat isn't getting carried away yet.

"People have been analysing (the 5-0 win), but what I'll say is we were very good," Muscat says. "People have tried to allude that Newcastle didn't play too well, but the things we worked on during the week worked on the day."

It's always straight down the line with Muscat. Victory's form, regardless of this early stage, has been impressive. There's an aggressive flair and hunger in the attacking third reminiscent of the 2006/07 season where they swept all before them, en route to an impressive premiership victory.

Muscat, though, is in no mood for nostalgia. "In a few rounds time we'll have a more accurate opinion on this, it's hard to judge form solely on three games," he says.

Muscat's just pleased to let the attacking play dominate the opposition, making his job in the defensive third easier in the process. "We're very comfortable with the way we're playing and the brand and type of football we're trying to achieve," he explains.

He refuses to get drawn into comparisons with past achievements, insisting it's too easy to heap added pressure on his blossoming team. "At this point in time, we've still got a little bit to go to emulate and be as good as we were in that championship-winning year," Muscat declares.

One thing is for certain, though: the A-League is sitting up and taking notice. The recent demolition of Newcastle was an emphatic message to Melbourne's challengers, and the impact wasn't lost on Muscat. He can see their steely gaze beginning to focus on grand final victory.

"There are teams that are going to be saying we've got a decent chance now," he says. "But, at the same time, Adelaide and Sydney have done the exact same thing we have."

Whether their rivals are keeping up with Victory's blistering pace isn't the point. Columns and opinions pre-season merely glanced at Victory. They'd picked up a few new players but none as high-profile as Sydney FC. Muscat says this allowed Melbourne to fly under the radar, and it's these new signings he identifies as major contributors to Victory's early form.

"Not a lot of people in Australia knew what Michael Thwaite was about, or what he could produce, even though he's Australian. No one had heard of Jose Luis (Lopez) and some people might have seen Ney Fabiano play a couple of times... They don't know much about these boys," Muscat explains. "All three of them have had a massive impact in a short period of time."

Impact is the word that best describes Victory's start this season. The squad is showing signs of real quality, cohesion, and understanding, even after three games, that has Victory fans dreaming of a second title in three years. For Muscat, that is down to the planning of senior figures at the club.

"All of a sudden we've got a lot of depth and that hasn't happened by accident, the coach and management have put that in place," Muscat muses. "We can look back to last year, we can look back two years, and all that counts for nothing because all that matters is what happens in the next three or four months."

**On any given day we're going to be a match for every team in this competition.**

No matter what team captains say, there is always an element of looking back. They say that if you lose touch with the rise, you may give way to your fall. And it's learning from previous experiences that enable players and teams to grow.

Last season started less spectacularly for Victory. Five consecutive draws to open the 2007/08 season meant Ernie Merrick's side were playing catch-up for the rest of the season, which ultimately cost them a finals berth. After that disappointment, it's the aim of getting back to previous heights that's driving Muscat and his teammates this season.

"We know starting well gives you a huge advantage," he says. "A lot of the boys have been here the past two seasons and they've seen that the difference between the two is night and day."

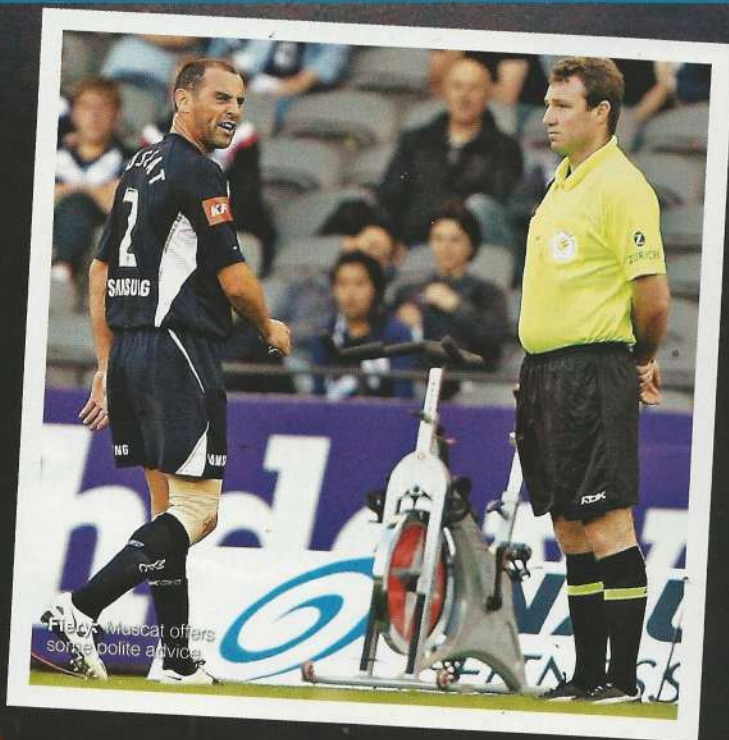
"As a group of players we got together and discussed a number of things and set ourselves some clear goals – one at the top of the agenda was to start well."

"We've got to start well, so it's been a focus; something we realised and weren't scared to speak about."

But Muscat has far too much experience to start making rash predictions. He remains realistic that the season is early and big statements only set you up for a fall – something he's desperate to avoid this year.

"All you can do is play to the best of your ability and, more times than not, if you do this the results will look after themselves," Muscat says. "With the squad of players, the men we've got going forward, and the defensive structure, I think on any given day we're going to be a match for every team in this competition." Ominous words indeed.





Rather than resting, Victory have used the recent international break as just another chance to maintain focus.

"We've gone back to training and we've enjoyed the week off, not by relaxing and putting our feet up, but by doing fitness testing and working harder than we have in previous weeks," Muscat says.

This weekend, it's just business as usual; at home to Adelaide United and Muscat isn't looking too far ahead. "There's too much water to go under the bridge to accurately say who's going to be in the final," he says. "We'll worry about what we can do and we'll let everyone else worry about themselves."

"We just look forward to playing in front of big crowds at Telstra Dome, because they give us an edge."

Muscat understands Melbourne owe their fans after last season, and knows exactly what they have to deliver.

"We know we've got to go out there and entertain these people, because they give us so much and the least we can do is go out there and play the type of football they want... and that's by attacking and having a go at the other teams."

"Everything you achieve you have to earn."



# JOEL IN THE CROWN

The international break has come at a good time for Newcastle Jets, but **JOEL GRIFFITHS** believes it's time for the premiers to show some pride

■ WORDS Thomas Woodgate

**T**HINGS are not going to plan at Newcastle. The beginning of their title defence in the Hyundai A-League 2008/09 season hasn't quite gone to plan. They've stuttered through their opening three games, but it's only the beginning of the season and there's a belief within the club that their luck is about to change. That time is on their side. That this blip can be rectified. But it's going to take a team effort. That's what star striker Joel Griffiths wholeheartedly believes.

"We haven't got off to the best start," Griffiths says frankly. "But as a team we're still learning how to play with each other, and the more the season goes on the better we'll be."

It's a change that needs to come soon, especially in light of Newcastle's 5-0 defeat at the hands of Melbourne Victory in round three.

"We were terrible all over the park, it's as simple as that," Griffiths says of the team's last performance. "If we want to be competitive this year and go back-to-back then we've got to be 100 times better than we were against Melbourne."

"Of course there's going to be a lot of expectation (because we're reigning premiers), but a lot of the time expectation brings the best out in a player and that added pressure is something I can deal with."

"We knew it wasn't going to be easy, but if we play the way we did (against Melbourne) then we'll be playing for the wooden spoon."

Talk of bottom-table finishes is premature for Griffiths and Newcastle, but the team is looking to learn from their recent disappointing performances. "Dutchy (coach Gary Van Egmond) doesn't like getting beaten the way we did and obviously the team

doesn't either," Griffiths says.

"It's important not to lose the lesson we were taught – hopefully it's a kick up the bum and we can wear our heart on our sleeve the next time we play because we've got to keep moving forwards."

And it's during the recent break for international football that Newcastle have stepped up the intensity of their training sessions. "We've been working really hard in training this week," Griffiths says. And he is also hopeful this break from the A-League season is enabling his partnership with marquee signing Edmundo Zura to flourish.

"We're getting there, it's a work in progress," Griffiths says. "He'll be good for us, he still needs a couple more games and the more games he plays the better he'll be for the team."

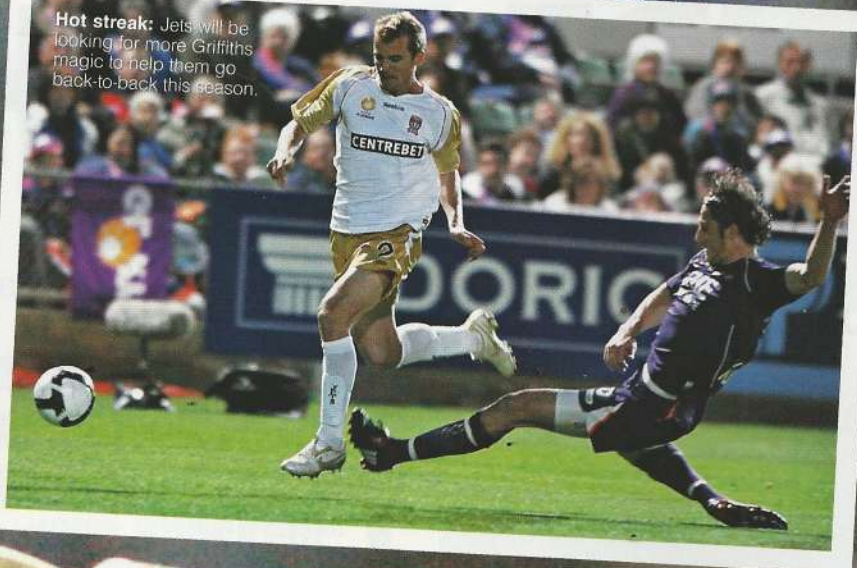
"We've got to get to know each other a little better – he's got so many good qualities that can benefit our team, and it's looking good."

Time waits for no player when the pressure begins to mount and, for Griffiths' strike partner Zura, the weight of expectation will only grow if performances don't improve. "Zura's still coming to grips with his new team and the style of play – he's got to learn very quickly or else people are going to put a lot more pressure on him," Griffiths says.

And pressure is something Griffiths is also facing, especially after the sensational form of last season, where his numerous goals paved the way for Jets' success. Two goals from the opening three games is a solid return, although both have been penalties. However, Griffiths is more concerned about his work ethic and contribution to the team over any personal statistics. "I've got to work hard and do the simple



**Hot streak:** Jets will be looking for more Griffiths magic to help them go back-to-back this season.



things, continue to get in the right place at the right time, and hopefully I'll be amongst the goals again.

"But that's not on my mind at the moment – it's about getting the three points in our next game against Sydney FC."

But despite Newcastle's stuttering start to the season, Griffiths says the mood remains positive within the camp. "Most of the boys know they've got to really pull their finger out," he says. "We've got to play with a bit of pride and passion the next time we get into the jerseys – that is something we missed that against Melbourne."

And just as a team wins as one, so do they in defeat. And although it's easy for critics to focus on a particular player, or in the case of Newcastle the acquisition of their imports, in times of strife it becomes more important than ever for the tightness of the group to remain in tact.

"If everyone plays to their potential then it's got nothing to do with the imports firing or not."

"It's about everyone working together and working through this hard time, otherwise it's going to be a very long season."

Next up for Jets is John Kosmina's Sydney FC – and it's a challenge Griffiths says he, and his teammates, are relishing and looking

at as an opportunity to ignite the fire in their season. "Sydney are a quality team with a really good attacking third," he says. "They're going to be tough, but we've got to be on our game and we have to perform a lot better than we did in Melbourne."

"Hopefully we can turn the season around, start getting a couple of wins on the board and go from a negative to a positive – it's a very important game for us and the boys on the team know that."


But aside from Griffiths' team aspirations, a struggling season will hinder Newcastle's star player, and last season's top scorer in the A-League, a chance to push himself at the highest level: namely, with a part in Pim Verbeek's Socceroos squad.

Omitted from the recent Netherlands friendly and Uzbekistan World Cup qualifier, Griffiths is wary of how his team's performances will affect his own personal ambitions.

"Pim likes to reward players that are on the top of the ladder, so it (Newcastle's struggling performances) will hinder that a little bit. Saying that, though, it's up to us – as players – to step up."

"We're in a situation where we can change his mind, so it's up to us to do the hard work on the training field, and hopefully it'll pay off in the game."

And the pay-off could affect Griffiths' fortunes both on and off the field. "Football's a funny thing: you're here one day and then you're off the next. You never know where you're going to be."

It's an honest and frank statement, and shouldn't ignite wantaway rumours. For Newcastle Jets fans, though, they'll be hoping to see Griffiths fire them to a back-to-back premiership this season. 

## BURNING BRIDGES

For Sydney's junior marquee player **MARK BRIDGE** this weekend's game is the one he's been waiting for

Many players, when returning to a former club, will play down the occasion and claim it's just another fixture in an important season, so the cliché goes. Not with Mark Bridge.

He's relishing it, even saying it's one of the first fixtures he looked out for. "Yeah, I looked out for my return to EnergyAustralia," Bridge admits. "I'm very excited about the game, I'm looking forward to going back there and getting three points for Sydney."

A striker not short on confidence, helped by being the grand-final winner for Newcastle in February, his deflection to Kosmina's Sydney revolution wasn't the best kept secret in A-League history. "The (Jets) supporters were booing me last season when they knew I was talking to Sydney," Bridge explains. "So I'm not expecting anything other than a couple of boos this weekend." Indeed he might, but Bridge is certain the move from Newcastle to Sydney has been the right one for him. "The club's a lot more professional at Sydney. The way things are done you can see it's one of the biggest clubs in the A-League."

Bridge is also quick to point that, in his opinion, the home side will be dealing with more than just the return of a former player and teammate.

"Newcastle are going to be out to win, but we've got a lot of dangerous players they're gonna have to worry about besides me," Bridge warns. "If we can score early we should shut the game out pretty early."

"The team's been playing excellent. It's only three weeks into the season and we're already playing brilliant football and it's only getting better – we're going to be hard to stop."

And if Bridge gets on the scoresheet himself this weekend, will he temper any celebrations? "I've been know to be a smart-ass with some of my celebrations – I'll just to wait and see what I feel like at the weekend," he says.

 **We knew it wasn't going to be easy, but if we play the way we did against Melbourne we'll be playing for the wooden spoon.** 



# OTHER SIDE OF THE

As Perth Glory continue to struggle for results at the start of the season, it appears to be the same old story in the west – but club captain **JAMIE COYNE** remains optimistic the future is bright

■ WORDS Thomas Woodgate



**Purple reign:** Coyne faces a tough captaincy at Perth.

**T**HE alarm bells are ringing in Western Australia. Three games in, no wins on the board and what looks like another season at the foot of the table awaits Perth Glory fans. But delve deeper and

there are signs that this is, in fact, a season where Glory are ready to make a favourable impression in the Hyundai A-League. And the man keen to be at the forefront of this change is club captain Jamie Coyne.

Leading his charges into battle and up the ladder is at the forefront of Coyne's mind, and he's adamant the times ahead are positive, scoffing at critics who – even at this early stage – are condemning Glory to the wooden spoon. That's not to say Coyne isn't concerned by his side's start.

"Obviously, we're disappointed with the results, we would have liked more points under our belt," he says. "But there are definitely some positive signs."

"We're happy with the type of football we've been playing; it's been very attacking and entertaining."

Football is a balancing act between the creativity of a free-flowing attack and the disciplinary, more regimented approach to defending. It's perhaps a juggle the team is still mastering.

"We're scoring a few goals, but we're letting too many in – it's that simple at the moment," Coyne says. The recent break for international football has given the skipper and coach David Mitchell the opportunity to address areas that have cost the side much-needed points.

"We're not happy with the defensive lapses," Coyne admits. "Instead of trying to win games 3-2 or 4-3, a 1-0 or 2-0 will do us at the moment."

For all their attacking flair, it hasn't quite happened defensively for Perth. Coyne, as both captain and defender, is ready for all that to change. "You don't really enjoy your football when you're not winning matches and, as captain, you take on more responsibility than everyone else," he says. "And you want to be a part of the transition to help the team move forwards."

According to Coyne, however, it's not all doom and gloom around Members Equity Stadium. "The attitude of the players, of everyone in the team, is very positive," he explains. "And the imports have gelled very well – they've started the season really well."

There's no denying the positive impact Perth's recruits have had on the pitch and, thanks to Coyne and his teammates' help, they're settling well off it too.

However, it's on the pitch where results have unsettled. A disappointing performance against Adelaide



# COYNE

“We’re happy with the type of football we’ve been playing; it’s been very attacking and entertaining.”

United in round one was followed by a heart-breaking last-gasp equaliser from Newcastle Jets in a game Perth should have won. Then came the 5-2 defeat to Sydney FC in round three. Perth started the game brightly, but a controversial 20th-minute red card for Dino Djulbic set the tone for a disheartening afternoon.

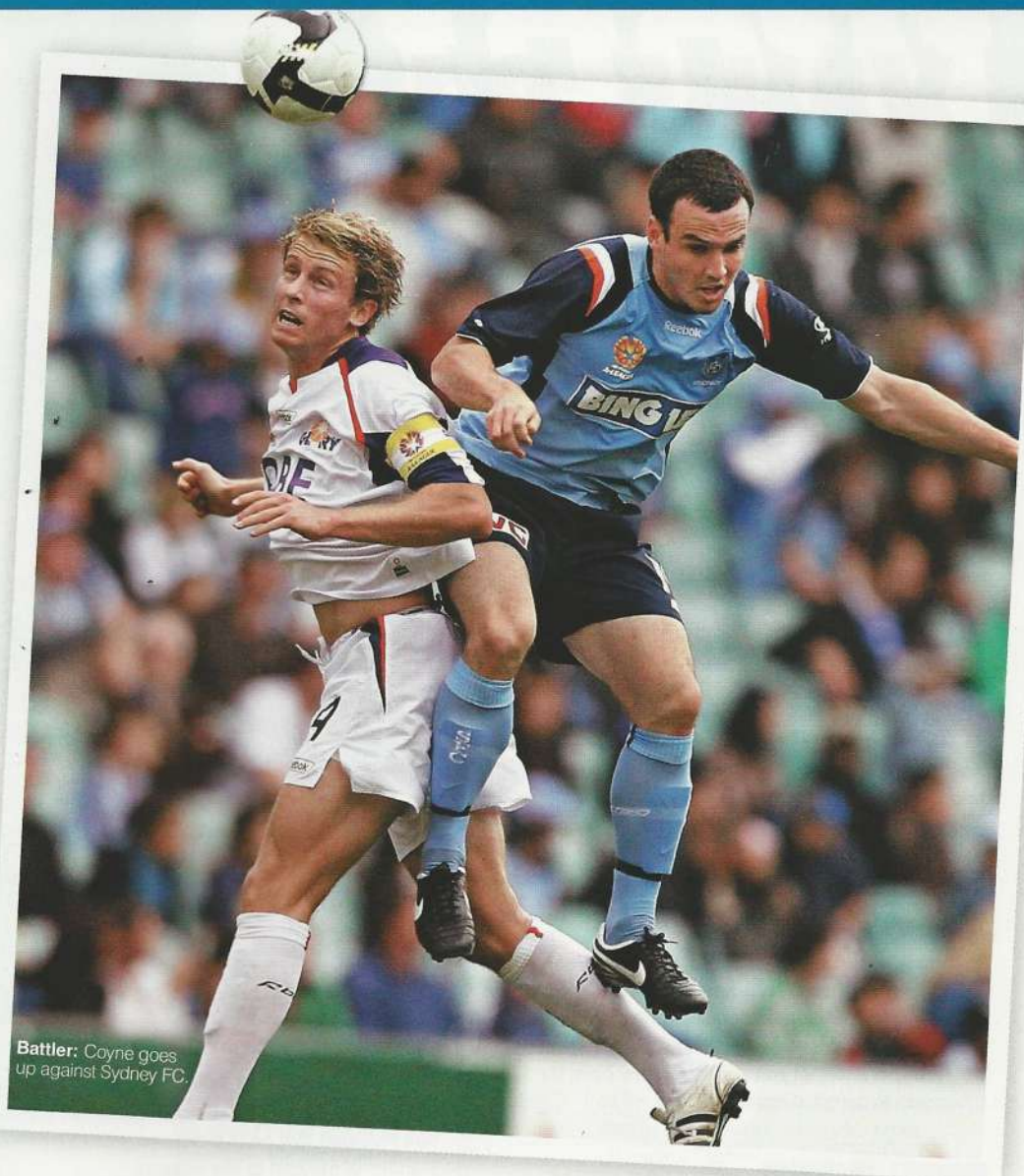
As Coyne says, though, it’s in the aftermath of a defeat that positives can be derived and built upon for future matches. “Once you step away from the game, the day after you think about how you actually played pretty well, and there are positives to come out of it.”

It’s in these moments Coyne’s role as captain becomes crucial. “At half-time against Sydney (being down to 10 men and losing 4-1) you’ve got to concentrate and make sure everyone stays motivated to make sure we don’t roll over,” Coyne says. And it’s in conjunction with Mitchell that the two men become a bandwagon of self-belief and motivation.

“Mitch just reminded us that the end of the season is a long way off, that we’re only three games in, and there are a lot of points up for grabs. He reminded us that this is just one game out of 21.”

And the team’s much-improved second-half performance against Sydney is indicative of the impact Coyne and Mitchell had on the team.

Even after a defeat, Coyne exerts his influence to reignite his teammates’ desire for success. “It’s natural for the team to be down after losing a game, you wouldn’t expect them to be any other way, but you have to look at the positives,” he says.



Battler: Coyne goes up against Sydney FC.



Coyne is keen to stress that, as the cliché goes, the season is a marathon, not a sprint. “As captain you remind everyone that it’s a long season,” he says defiantly. “We’re still moving in the right direction, and we feel we’ve got a lot to offer to the competition come end of the year.”

And what position does Coyne expect, realistically, Perth to be in at the end of the A-League season?

“We, like everyone else, expect to be in the top four,” he says. “We feel we’re good enough at the moment. We don’t feel we’ve played anyone where we’ve thought they’re better than us; we’ve just come away from games disappointed because we should have got better results.”

“It’s the early part of the season, and there’s no reason to stress yet.”

And in this season, the onus is certainly on Perth – who’ve been underachievers in the league’s short history – to make more of an impression. Coyne is also quick to realise that history – especially a negative one – can weigh heavily when trends aren’t reversed.

“The thing is, there are a lot of new players in the team this year, and it’s Mitch’s first full season, so they don’t have that burden,” Coyne says. “I don’t think you can really relate what’s happening this year to what’s happened in the past.”

Coyne also has one eye on his own future. Socceroos recognition hasn’t come as easily as it might had Coyne been plying his trade at a more successful club. But he remains pragmatic on his continual omission from the national team.

“Players playing in winning teams obviously stand out a lot more,” Coyne says of international selection. “But if you deserve to be there, you’ll be there.”

This doesn’t mean Coyne will re-consider his future path, and the disappointment hasn’t deterred Coyne from the job at hand. “As a club we’re trying to move forward and think about what’s happening now and in the future,” he says. “And, as captain, you want to be a part of that and help it move forward.”



# WORLD NEWS\*

*Except this week, it's all about the English Premier League. Just because they're so rich.*



## CITY READY TO DO BUSINESS

FRESH from smashing the British transfer record by signing Brazilian Robinho, it appears Manchester City may set their sights on compatriot Kaka (above).

Robinho has put City on the international map and Kaka's agent fuelled speculation this week, having been linked with Chelsea during the recent window.

It is believed AC Milan may consider selling the midfielder at season's end for \$175m.

"I think Manchester City are headed in the right direction, but they have big work to do," Kaká's representative Diogo Kotscho says.

"Kaká would prefer a club like Chelsea, Real Madrid or Milan, but we never know.

"This season Manchester City do not have a team to win the Champions League. Maybe next season they can get into that competition – they have the prospects to be good enough."



## HAMMERED OUT

WEST Ham managerial target Slaven Bilic (left) insists rumours about a possible move to London are more of a help than a hindrance to Croatia's 2010 World Cup campaign.

Hammers chiefs made a quickfire visit to Zagreb to make a pitch to their overwhelming choice and a handsome pay increase from his current \$350,000 salary.

"It has not been a distraction, it might have even been a help," Bilic says. "I feel honoured to have been linked with a big club in one of the biggest leagues in the world.

"I am not sure whether some people in England understand the pride and passion that we feel representing our country. But it means something special to us all. Money never enters my head when I am representing Croatia."

But with Bilic unlikely to walk from a two-year deal with the Croatian FA, Hammers' technical director Gianluca Nani is eager to put his Italian stamp on things with former Chelsea star Gianfranco Zola set to replace Alan Curbishley.

Bilic was last season approached by Fulham and Manchester City.

## SPURS SIGNING STILL UNITED

NEW Tottenham striker Fraizer Campbell (below) has revealed that he is likely to return to Old Trafford at the end of the season.

The 20-year-old was used as a sweetener by savvy Sir Alex Ferguson in the seemingly never-ending saga that saw Dimitar Berbatov head to Manchester United. "I've had various meetings with him (Sir Alex Ferguson) and I'm in his plans for the future," said Campbell.

"Hopefully I can get some experience, come back and get a place in his team."

Campbell played in United's season-opening draw with Newcastle after returning from a successful loan spell with Hull City last season.



## INCE BACKS GRELLA

BLACKBURN boss Paul Ince has backed Vince Grella (left) to become a Premiership hit, despite the midfielder running out of puff in last week's debut against West Ham.

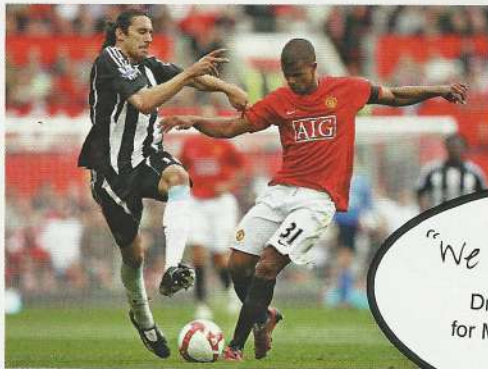
Grella, who is in doubt for this week's clash with Arsenal after suffering a calf strain while with

the Soccerroos, was taken off at half-time of his EPL debut. Ince revealed that a Frank Grella approached him before the pair went up the Upton Park tunnel at half-time and told him he was struggling.

"He had no more petrol in the tank," revealed Ince, who switched Brett Emerton into Grella's midfield position from the wing in the second half.

"He only arrived a few days before the game, plus he's not used to playing in the Premiership and it will take time, but he will come good."

Grella has also had to forgo his favoured no. 13 shirt (occupied by Georgian Zurab Khizanishvili), opting for 11 instead.



*"I didn't want to arrive by helicopter because people will say that I'm getting carried away with success, but there was no other way. I would have been late for training."*

City's new signing Robinho slips a hand into those deep pockets.



*"We really have deep pockets."*

Dr Sulaiman Al-Fahim, spokesman for Man City's new owners, Abu Dhabi United Group.





# MILES AWAY FROM HOME

A dream move to England was just what **MILE STERJOVSKI** wanted, but it hasn't quite gone to plan for the Socceroos man

■ **WORDS** David Davutovic

**M**ILE Sterjovski could be forgiven for thinking he has erred in joining Derby County.

Consider this chain of events since he joined from Turkey last January: He has not yet tasted victory, the Rams were relegated from the English Premier League and now, somehow, he is even struggling to break into the squad, let alone the starting XI.

To rub salt into the wound, Derby are stuck to the bottom of the Championship, the UK's second-tier league, having secured a mere point in four outings.

As the voices of discontent grow louder at Pride Park, coach Paul Jewell's winless streak is up to 36 and counting.

Clearly out of favour, Sterjovski could have opted to file a transfer request during the recent window and tried his luck elsewhere. He opted instead to roll his sleeves up and keep quiet.

Even a goal against South Africa while on Australia duty in mid-August did nothing to sway Jewell, leaving Sterjovski out of the squad thereafter. The 29-year-old admits the Socceroos hit-outs have been ideal and hopes to break into the squad once he returns from the World Cup qualifier.

"I'd like to get some more game time in the near future," Sterjovski says. "I did the whole pre-season with Derby and was unfortunate to get injured before the season started. But it didn't affect me too much.

"With the South Africa game, it was really good to get a run after three weeks. I hadn't played a game for that long, but I felt pretty sharp.

"Without having match fitness I don't know if I would've lasted 90, so I was happy to play 60."

Sterjovski's goal against South Africa at Loftus Road – a sublime first-time volley past the onrushing keeper – was more significant than he has been credited for.

It was Vincenzo Grella who released Sterjovski after dinking a clever ball over the South African defence. Impressed with Grella's performance, Blackburn manager Paul Ince made immediate enquiries and eventually hijacked the midfielder from under the noses of at least two rival Premier League clubs.

"I made a few runs before that one and I spoke to Vinnie about it after the game," Sterjovski said. "He tried to put the ball over a few times and luckily on the third occasion it was a perfect ball and I just lobbed it over the keeper."

Sterjovski could no doubt pass on a few pointers to his Socceroos teammate, having tasted four months of England's top flight earlier this year. Despite their disastrous start he is confident, with a 46-game campaign, Derby can climb towards the Championship summit.

Jewell is under massive pressure from Rams fans who were promised a swift return to the Premiership on the back of a summer shopping spree.

"We've got a lot of new players and it will take time for them to gel," Sterjovski admits.

Is automatic promotion still on the cards? "It's still possible," he said. "You can't say at this early stage, but we have the squad to do it. If we get on a roll, get our confidence up, I think it's possible."

One of those new faces at Pride Park is Ruben Zadkovich, but he has been unable to transfer his goalscoring feat for the Olyroos in Beijing to his new club.

The former Sydney FC utility last week underwent a hernia operation and will be sidelined for another three weeks. "I've tried to make him feel welcome," Sterjovski jokes.

"Obviously he was away at the Olympics, but hopefully he gets back quickly and can play a part this season." ■



IMAGE: GETTY IMAGES



# TURKISH DELIGHT

He lit up the skies above Adelaide United's Hindmarsh Stadium, but it's now in one of Europe's most cultural countries that **BRUCE DJITE** is continuing his football education

■ **WORDS** Jack Korb

**B**RUCE Djite has mixed heritage in his blood. Born in Washington DC – his father hails from Ivory Coast and his mother from Togo – Djite moved to Sydney when he was three, before moving on to Adelaide. Now a big transfer to Gendebirli has Djite calling Turkey home. Djite is a mover and a shaker, quite literally.

A highly impressive Hyundai A-League season 2007/08 for Adelaide United saw his football stock rise considerably, so much so that he's reached the heights of Australia selection, as well as securing the big transfer to Europe.

It's a bold move for a player who, at the age of 21, is still learning his trade. "It's been quite a big culture shock," Djite says of his move. "I'm adapting OK and every day is a new learning experience, and I'll be better for the experience."

The fruits of his move are still yet to mature, as he's only been there three months, but during this time Djite's eyes have been opened. He's under no illusions of the task that awaits him. In fact, he's ready for it.

"The game's a lot quicker out there (Turkey) – it's much, much quicker," Djite explains. "I found adjusting to the speed of the game the hardest thing. Everything is pretty much 100 miles an hour, at least that's what it feels like to me."

"But I've adjusted to that now."

And it's in this challenging new environment that Djite says the company he's now keeping will only help him continue to improve. "The A-League is physical, but this is a whole new level," he says.

Adapting to his surroundings is nothing new for Djite. "Being with the Olympic team and Socceroos, and the countries that we go to, means it's nothing I haven't seen before."

And aside from showing his new fans and teammates what he's capable of, he's got cultural differences to overcome as well.

"Everyone's Muslim and they're very religious, so that's a big difference from Australia," he says. "I'll be there before games strapping my ankle and there'll be guys beside me on the floor with their towels praying – stuff like that is pretty big for them."

"It's not affecting me in a bad way or anything like that, it's a different lifestyle they live and a different culture I'm living in."

"I respect their culture and they respect mine – it's mutual respect, so it's all good."

And then there's the subject of language. It's a common problem in football today; such is the international nature of the world game. "(Turkish is) a hard language to learn, but I've picked up a handful of words, the basics: come, go, left, right."

"As long as you're playing well and you can communicate on the field then you should be alright."

Even communicating with his new coach, Mesut Bakkal, is problematic. "When I have meetings with him I have a translator, but even then it's not in good English so I don't know what the coach's expectations are of me," he says.

**I respect their culture, I'll be there before games and there'll be guys beside me on the floor praying.**

But his teammates have been welcoming, helped mostly by the trail that's been blazed by Aussies at Gendebirli. "(Josip) Skoko's been there and they love him and Nicky Carle, too," he says. "The guys here speak highly of them so when I came they immediately took to me and wanted to help me – they want me to be successful. They have the idea that if I'm successful and everyone else is successful, then the club will be."

Helping Djite settle into his new home is fellow Aussie James Troisi. His recent arrival is not only great news for Djite, but for his new team as well. "They asked me about Troisi and I told them what a talented player he is," he explains.

The international break came at a good time for Djite, having already made his debut for Gendebirli. And, remaining laidback and confident, Djite took that particular occasion in his stride. "I wasn't that nervous," he recalls. "We drew 1-1, but it was good to

get the game out of the way and now the season is in full swing – I'm just hoping to go back there and give some good performances."

And the season ahead should prove a massive learning experience. There's the opportunity to play against some of Europe's best, in the form of Galatasaray and Fenerbahce, as well as the enthusiastic and passionate supporters in Turkey.

"They are fanatical, the fans really get into their football and their teams," he says. But there are experiences of an opposite nature that he's also learning from. "Last weekend I played in a closed stadium because the fans of the opposition had a punishment, but they were still outside making lots of noise."

Noise is something Djite is hoping to transfer to his Socceroos career. He's been getting involved with Australia, but he's yet to truly light up the international stage, and that's something he's hoping his move to Turkey will help him rectify.

"Playing with better players in a big league like that is only going to make you better," he says. "I don't think it's possible to go backwards when you're playing against that type of opposition and when you've got training facilities like we do at our club – there's no reason why you can't progress."

Djite is also hoping his step-up in football surroundings will convince Socceroos coach Pim Verbeek to make him a permanent fixture in the upcoming crucial World Cup qualifiers. "He (Pim) is happy I've moved to a good league like the one Turkey has," Djite says. "He thinks highly of the league so, for the national team setup, it was a positive move and a very important one for me."

And Djite won't have to wait long for his homecoming, when Qatar and Australia face each other on October 15 at Brisbane's Suncorp Stadium. Already the excitement is building for Adelaide United's former front man, "I would do anything to make that squad, absolutely anything."

"I'm hoping to be involved and to play at Suncorp again – that would be awesome. They've got a great stadium and when we last played there against Iraq, there were 50,000 people and they really inspired us."

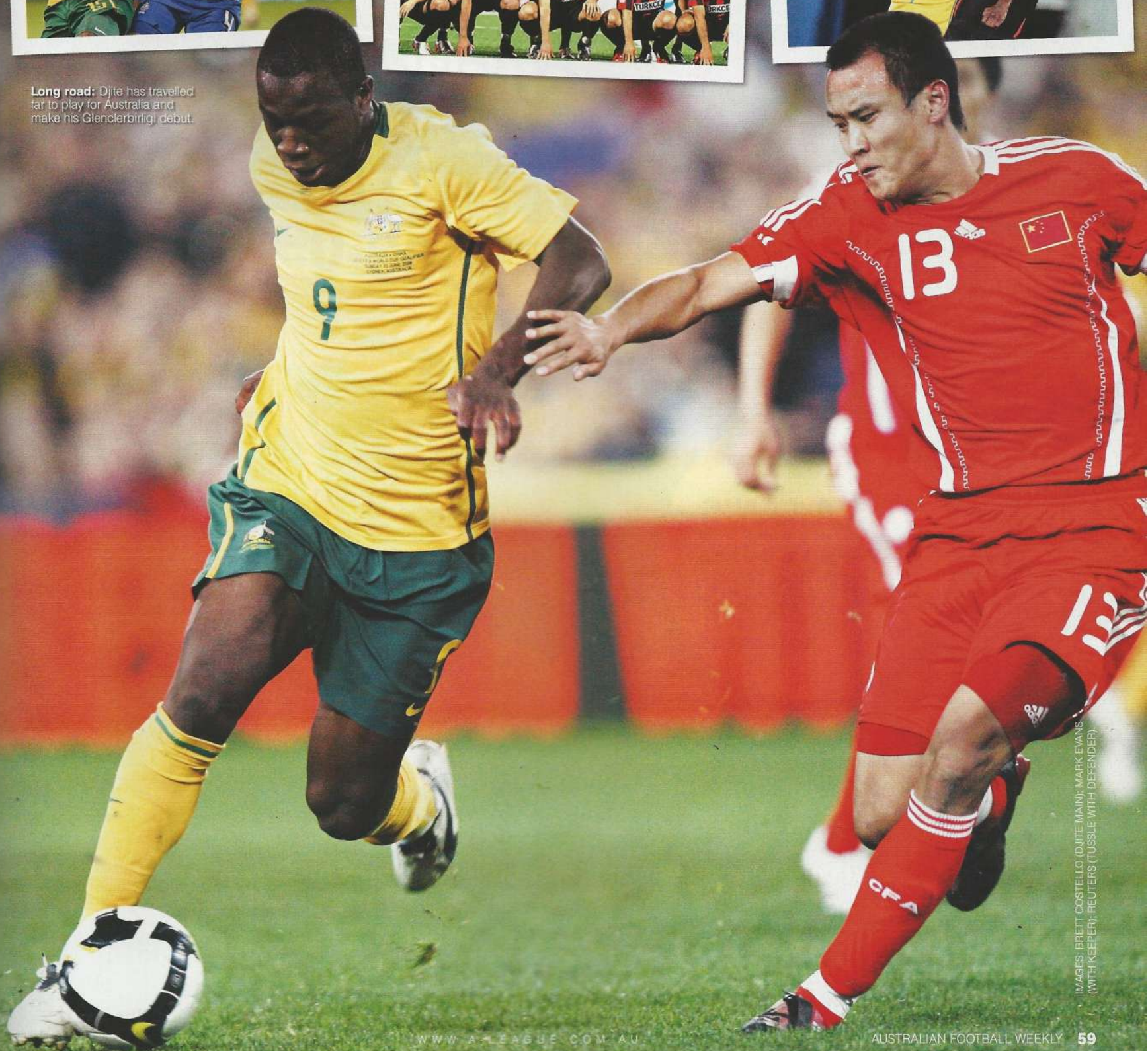
"I'm really looking forward to the match."

And if he was to score the winning goal? "It'd be a dream come true," he says with a laugh. ☺





**Long road:** Djite has travelled far to play for Australia and make his Glentworth debut.

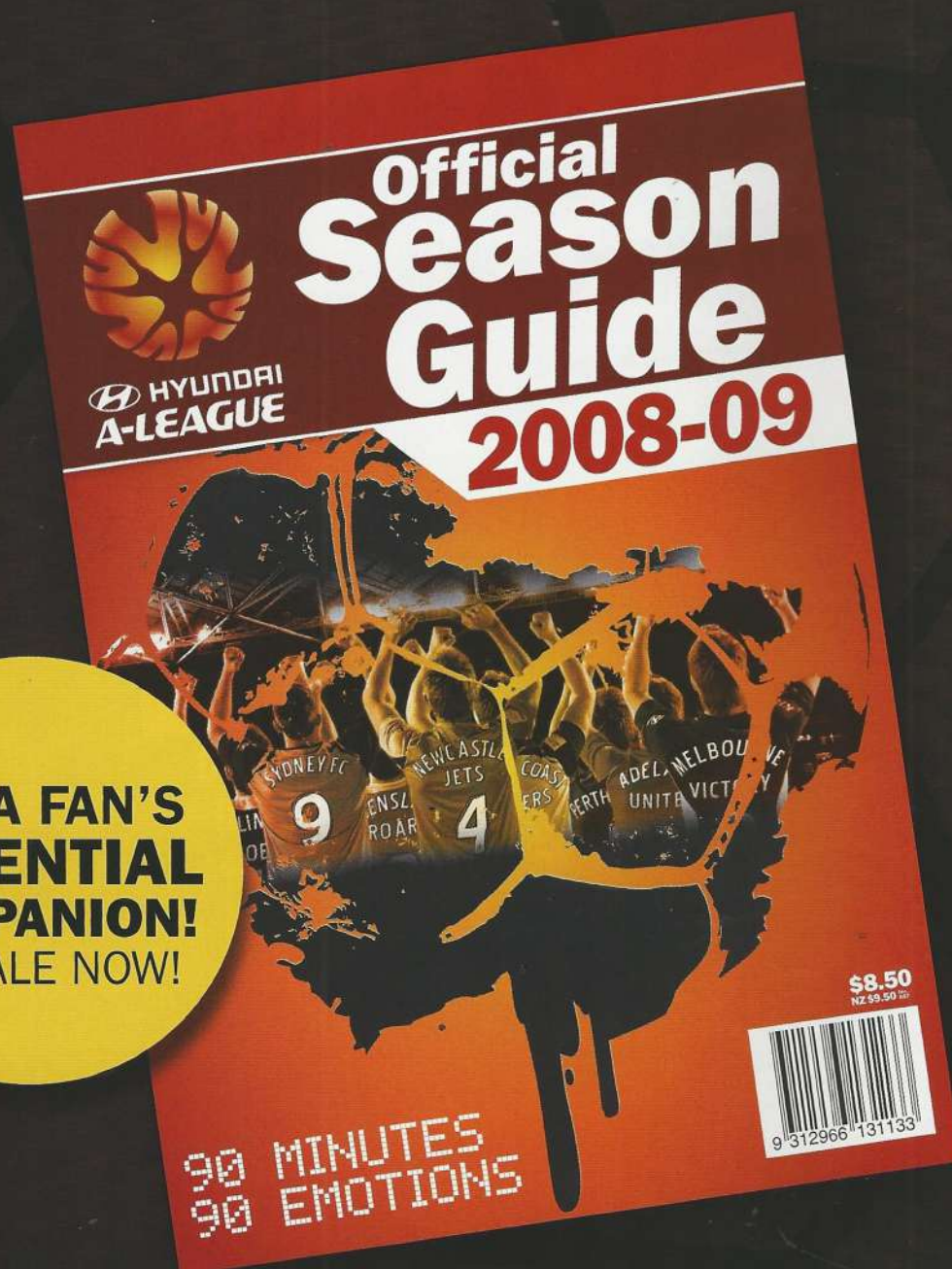


IMAGES: BRETT COSTELLO (DJITE MAIN); MARK EVANS (WITH KEEPER); REUTERS (TUSSELE WITH DEFENDER)



# The Hyundai A-League Season Guide

is the 2008-2009 competition's official information handbook



It features complete A-League player profiles, photos and statistics, contact details plus every club's comprehensive records and all-time A-League records.

There's also an interactive section where fans can list all the relevant info from their team's performance round by round.



## ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

Pos.	Team	GP	W	D	L	GS	GA	GD	PTS
1	Chelsea	3	2	1	0	6	1	5	7
2	Liverpool	3	2	1	0	3	1	2	7
3	Manchester City	3	2	0	1	8	4	4	6
4	Arsenal	3	2	0	1	4	1	3	6
5	West Ham United	3	2	0	1	6	5	1	6
6	Middlesbrough	3	2	0	1	5	4	1	6
7	Aston Villa	3	1	1	1	6	5	1	4
8	Bolton Wanderers	3	1	1	1	3	2	1	4
9	Manchester United	2	1	1	0	2	1	1	4
10	Blackburn Rovers	3	1	1	1	5	7	-2	4
11	Newcastle United	3	1	1	1	2	4	-2	4
12	Hull City	3	1	1	1	3	7	-4	4
13	Wigan Athletic	3	1	0	2	6	3	3	3
14	Fulham	2	1	0	1	2	2	0	3
15	Stoke City	3	1	0	2	5	7	-2	3
16	Portsmouth	3	1	0	2	3	5	-2	3
17	Everton	3	1	0	2	4	7	-3	3
18	Sunderland	3	1	0	2	5	3	-3	3
19	Tottenham Hotspur	3	0	1	2	3	5	-2	1
20	West Bromwich Albion	3	0	1	2	1	3	-2	1

## Last Round Results

Date	Score
30-Aug-08	Arsenal 3-0 Newcastle United
30-Aug-08	Bolton Wanderers 0-0 West Brom Albion
30-Aug-08	Everton 0-3 Portsmouth
30-Aug-08	Hull City 0-5 Wigan Athletic
30-Aug-08	Middlesbrough 2-1 Stoke City
30-Aug-08	West Ham United 4-1 Blackburn Rovers
31-Aug-08	Aston Villa 0-0 Liverpool
31-Aug-08	Chelsea 1-1 Tottenham Hotspur
31-Aug-08	Sunderland 0-3 Manchester City

## Up Coming Fixtures

Date	Score
13-Sep-08	Blackburn Rovers v Arsenal
13-Sep-08	Fulham v Bolton Wanderers
13-Sep-08	Liverpool v Manchester United
13-Sep-08	Manchester City v Chelsea
13-Sep-08	Newcastle United v Hull City
13-Sep-08	Portsmouth v Middlesbrough
13-Sep-08	West Brom Albion v West Ham United
13-Sep-08	Wigan Athletic v Sunderland
14-Sep-08	Stoke City v Everton
15-Sep-08	Tottenham Hotspur v Aston Villa

## BUNDESLIGA

Pos.	Team	GP	W	D	L	GS	GA	GD	PTS
1	Schalke 04	3	2	1	0	5	1	4	7
2	Hamburg SV	3	2	1	0	8	5	3	7
3	Borussia Dortmund	3	2	1	0	5	3	2	7
4	Bayer Leverkusen	3	2	0	1	9	5	4	6
5	VfB Stuttgart	3	2	0	1	5	3	2	6
6	TSG Hoffenheim	3	2	0	1	6	5	1	6
7	Bayern Munich	3	1	2	0	7	4	3	5
8	VfL Wolfsburg	3	1	2	0	6	5	1	5
9	FC Koln	3	1	1	1	4	3	1	4
10	Hertha Berlin	3	1	1	1	4	5	-1	4
11	Borussia M'gladbach	3	1	0	2	4	6	-2	3
12	Karlsruhe	3	1	0	2	2	4	-2	3
13	Werder Bremen	3	0	2	1	5	6	-1	2
14	Arminia Bielefeld	3	0	2	1	5	7	-2	2
15	Eintracht Frankfurt	3	0	2	1	3	5	-2	2
16	VfL Bochum	3	0	1	2	2	4	-2	1
17	Energie Cottbus	3	0	1	2	0	4	-4	1
18	Hannover 96	3	0	1	2	0	5	-5	1

## Last Round Results

Date	Score
29-Aug-08	Karlsruhe 0-2 FC Koln
30-Aug-08	VfL Wolfsburg 2-2 Eintracht Frankfurt
30-Aug-08	Borussia M'gladbach 3-2 Werder Bremen
30-Aug-08	Energie Cottbus 0-1 Borussia Dortmund
30-Aug-08	Bayer Leverkusen 5-2 TSG Hoffenheim
30-Aug-08	Arminia Bielefeld 2-4 Hamburg SV
30-Aug-08	Schalke 04 1-0 VfL Bochum
31-Aug-08	Bayern Munich 4-1 Hertha Berlin
31-Aug-08	VfB Stuttgart 2-0 Hannover 96

## Up Coming Fixtures

Date	Score
12-Sep-08	Eintracht Frankfurt v Karlsruhe
13-Sep-08	Hertha Berlin v VfL Wolfsburg
13-Sep-08	Hamburg SV v Bayer Leverkusen
13-Sep-08	FC Koln v Bayern Munich

13-Sep-08	Borussia Dortmund	v	Schalke 04
13-Sep-08	Werder Bremen	v	Energie Cottbus
13-Sep-08	TSG Hoffenheim	v	VfB Stuttgart
14-Sep-08	Hannover 96	v	Borussia M'gladbach
14-Sep-08	VfL Bochum	v	Arminia Bielefeld

## LA LIGA

Pos.	Team	GP	W	D	L	GS	GA	GD	PTS
1	Atletico Madrid	1	1	0	0	4	0	4	3
2	Valencia	1	1	0	0	3	0	3	3
3	Almeria	1	1	0	0	3	1	2	3
4	Deportivo La Coruna	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	3
5	Getafe	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	3
6	Espanyol	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	3
7	Numancia	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	3
8	Recreativo Huelva	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	3
9	Osasuna	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
10	Racing Santander	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
11	Sevilla FC	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
12	Villarreal	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
13	Real Madrid	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0
14	Sporting Gijon	1	0	0	1	2	-1	0	
15	Barcelona	1	0	0	1	0	1	-1	0
16	Real Betis	1	0	0	1	0	1	-1	0
17	Valladolid	1	0	0	1	0	1	-1	0
18	Athletic Bilbao	1	0	0	1	1	3	-2	0
19	Mallorca	1	0	0	1	0	3	-3	0
20	Malaga	1	0	0	1	0	4	-4	0

## Last Round Results

Date	Score
30-Aug-08	Espanyol 1-0 Valladolid
30-Aug-08	Valencia 3-0 Mallorca
31-Aug-08	Athletic Bilbao 1-3 Almeria
31-Aug-08	Atletico Madrid 4-0 Malaga
31-Aug-08	Deportivo La Coruna 2-1 Real Madrid
31-Aug-08	Numancia 1-0 Barcelona
31-Aug-08	Osasuna 1-1 Villarreal
31-Aug-08	Racing Santander 1-1 Sevilla FC
31-Aug-08	Real Betis 0-1 Recreativo Huelva
31-Aug-08	Sporting Gijon 1-2 Getafe

## Up Coming Fixtures

Date	Score
13-Sep-08	Barcelona v Racing Santander
13-Sep-08	Sevilla FC v Sporting Gijon
13-Sep-08	Valladolid v Atletico Madrid
14-Sep-08	Almeria v Valencia
14-Sep-08	Getafe v Real Betis
14-Sep-08	Malaga v Athletic Bilbao
14-Sep-08	Mallorca v Osasuna
14-Sep-08	Real Madrid v Numancia
14-Sep-08	Recreativo Huelva v Espanyol
14-Sep-08	Villarreal v Deportivo La Coruna

## SERIE A

Pos.	Team	GP	W	D	L	GS	GA	GD	PTS
1	Lazio	1	1	0	0	4	1	3	3
2	Torino	1	1	0	0	3	0	3	3
3	Udinese	1	1	0	0	3	1	2	3
4	Bologna	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	3
5	Chievo Verona	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	3
6	Atalanta	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	3
7	Catania Calcio	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	3
8	Florentina	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
9	Inter Milan	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
10	Juventus	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
11	Napoli	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
12	Roma	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
13	Sampdoria	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
14	AC Milan	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0
15	Reggina	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0
16	Genoa	1	0	0	1	0	1	-1	0
17	Siena	1	0	0	1	0	1	-1	0
18	Palermo	1	0	0	1	1	3	-2	0
19	Cagliari	1	0	0	1	1	4	-3	0
20	Lecce	1	0	0	1	0	3	-3	0

## Last Round Results

Date	Score
30-Aug-08	Sampdoria 1-1 Inter Milan
30-Aug-08	Udinese 3-1 Palermo
31-Aug-08	AC Milan 1-2 Bologna
31-Aug-08	AS Roma 1-1 Napoli
31-Aug-08	Atalanta 1-0 Siena
31-Aug-08	Cagliari 1-4 Lazio
31-Aug-08	Catania Calcio 1-0 Genoa

31-Aug-08	*Chievo Verona	2-1	Reggina
31-Aug-08	Florentina	1-1	Juventus
31-Aug-08	Torino	3-0	Lecce

## Up Coming Fixtures

Date	Score
13-Sep-08	Inter Milan v Catania Calcio
13-Sep-08	Palermo v AS Roma
14-Sep-08	Bologna v Atalanta
14-Sep-08	Genoa v AC Milan
14-Sep-08	Juventus v Udinese
14-Sep-08	Lazio v Sampdoria
14-Sep-08	Lecce v Chievo Verona
14-Sep-08	Napoli v Fiorentina
14-Sep-08	Reggina v Torino
14-Sep-08	Siena v Cagliari

## SCOTTISH PREMIER LEAGUE

Pos.	Team	GP	W	D	L	GS	GA	GD	PTS
1	Rangers	4	3	1	0	8	3	5	10
2	Kilmarnock	4	3	1	0	4	0	4	10
3	Hearts	4	3	0	1	7	6	1	9
4	Celtic	4	2	1	1	7	5	2	7
5	Inverness CT	4	2	1	1	5	3	2	7
6	Aberdeen	4	2	1	1	3	0	7	7
7	Hamilton	4	2	0	2	5	4	1	6
8	Hibernian	4	1	1	2	4	5	-1	4
9	Motherwell	4	1	1	2	4	5	-1	4
10	Dundee Utd	4	0	2	2	3	7	-4	2
11	St Mirren	4	0	1	3	1	4	-3	1
12	Falkirk	4	0	0	4	3	9	-6	0

## Last Round Results

Date	Score
30-Aug-08	Dundee Utd 0-2 Kilmarnock
30-Aug-08	Falkirk 1-2 Inverness CT
30-Aug-08	Hamilton 1-2 Hearts
30-Aug-08	Hibernian 0-1 Motherwell
30-Aug-08	St Mirren 0-1 Aberdeen
31-Aug-08	Celtic 2-4 Rangers

## SUPER LEAGUE GREECE

Pos.	Team	GP	W	D	L	GS	GA	GD	PTS
1	Larissa	1	1	0	0	3	0	3	3
2	Olympiacos	1	1	0	0	3	1	2	3
3	Aris Salonika	1	1	0	0	2	0	2	3
4	PAOK Salonika	1	1	0	0	2	0	2	3
5	AEK Athens	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	3
6	Ergotelis	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	3
7	Panserraikos	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	3
8	FC Xanthi	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	3
9	Iraklis	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0
10	Panathinaikos	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0
11	Panthrakikos	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0
12	Panionios	1	0	0	1	0	1	-1	0
13	Asteras Tripoli	1	0	0	1	1	3	-2	0
14	Levadiakos	1	0	0	1	0	2	-2	0
15	OFI Crete	1	0	0	1	0	2	-2	0
16	Thrasivoulos	1	0	0	1	0	3	-3	0

## Last Round Results

Date	Score
30-Aug-08	OFI Crete 0-2 PAOK Salonika
30-Aug-08	Olympiacos 3-1 Asteras Tripoli
30-Aug-08	Panthrakikos 1-2 Ergotelis
31-Aug-08	AEK Athens 2-1 Panathinaikos
31-Aug-08	Aris Salonika 2-0 Levadiakos
31-Aug-08	Iraklis 1-2 Panserraikos
31-Aug-08	Larissa 3-0 Thrasivoulos
31-Aug-08	Panionios 0-1 FC Xanthi

## LIGUE 1

Pos.	Team	GP	W	D	L	GS	GA	GD	PTS
1	Marseille	4	3	1	0	11	5	6	10
2	Lyon	4	3	1	0	6	0	6	10
3	Le Mans	4	3	0	1	8	3	5	9
4	Nice	4	3	0	1	5	2	3	9
5	Grenoble	4	3	0	1	4	3	1	9
6	Paris St Germain	4	2	1	1	3	2	1	7
7	Bordeaux	4	2	0	2	5	4	1	6
8	Valenciennes	4	2	0	2	5	6	-1	6
9	Auxerre	4	2	0	2	4	6	-2	6



## YOU'RE IN THE SPOTLIGHT...

NAME **Anthony Downey**AGE **55**NICKNAME **Fonz**

**F**OOTBALL'S all about consistency. A dozen games here, a dozen games there, right? How about 49 consecutive seasons? Not possible we hear you say? Well, Downey, aka Fonz, is living proof that it's possible.

"I've had the odd (minor) injury, but nothing's that kept me out for an entire season," he tells us of this amazing feat. Fonz might not be a one-man team – he's played for at least seven – but considering that's spread over the course of 49 seasons he's certainly a loyal player.

Stretching as far back as 1960, Fonz remembers going down to Manly Vale with his mother where he was signed up on the spot and played his first game and, as the cliché goes, he never looked back. "I'm a natural left-footer, so I was on the left wing in those days," he remembers fondly.

But that's not to say Fonz didn't get his fair share of goals. "In the 1981/82 season I had a competition with one of the strikers," he tells us with great enthusiasm. "We both ended up getting 26 goals that season and won the league – we still call each other 26 now."

While most players drift out of the game altogether later on in

Each week AFW profiles a player or team from the leagues across Australia. Profiles on John Aloisi can be found elsewhere in the magazine – this is for YOU and/or your team. This week...



life, Fonz is not one of those. Oh no. Sure, he lacks the pace of his younger years, but he uses his (considerable) experience in other areas to benefit the team. And the memories continue to flood in, even if the goals don't. "The highlight was winning the over-35 division in 2001/02," he tells us. "We beat Brookvale and they had Alan Hunter, Graham Arnold and a few of those guys in the side." Impressive stuff, Fonz.

But, at the age of 55, does he think it's time to hang the boots up and perhaps enjoy a more sedate pastime of watching instead of playing? What do think? Not likely. "I'm 55 now and I'm thinking the football might go as long as the working career." Well football is definitely more of a priority than work if you ask us...

He's as passionate off the field, regularly watching Arsenal in the English Premier League and Sydney FC in the Hyundai A-League, as well as remembering with great fondness Northern Spirit at North Sydney Oval.

Oh and the guy in the picture with him? That's Neil Jary, a Londoner who's a mad Chelsea supporter (and those Chelsea fans are not usually ones to mess with), and, according to Fonz, the picture doesn't tell the full story... "We didn't have a punch-up; he'd clashed heads with someone else."

See, looks can be deceiving; just don't bet on Fonz taking it any easier on the football pitch any time soon.

AFW wants to hear from YOU too. Get in touch. Individual players, local teams – all skill levels, all ages, all areas. Talk to AFW today: [footballweekly@newsmagazines.com.au](mailto:footballweekly@newsmagazines.com.au)



## QUIZ

Want to sit a test that's much better than hours of geometry and maths? Well, here it is: it's a quiz... on... football!

1. Who's the all-time leading goal scorer of the Hyundai A-League?

2. Apart from Edmundo Zura, how many other players from Ecuador have played in the A-League?

3. What country is Sydney FC's former marquee player Dwight Yorke from?

4. For how many Hyundai A-League clubs has Damian Mori played?

5. From where did Sydney FC sign Alex Brosque?

6. Has any team won the A-League grand final after being minor premiers?

7. Who is the Newcastle Jets vice-captain?

8. What is Perth Glory's highest ever A-League position finish?

9. Which player holds the record for most appearances for Queensland Roar?

10. And finally... who won the minor premiership in the first A-League season in 2005/06?

ANSWERS 1 Archie Thompson, 2006/07 season, 75 in the first season of the A-League in 2005/06; 2 None; 3 Trinidad and Tobago; 4 3; 5 Central Coast Mariners; 6 Perth Glory and Queensland Roar; 7 Yes, once, Melbourne Victory; 8 2006/07 season; 9 2006/07 season; 10 Adelaide United.

## UPS

## AFW

Australia needed it, now has it. Embrace it, love it and get in touch with us. This mag is for you and we want to hear from you. Weekly (very large) doses of everything football – it's genius. And will be worth reading, honest.

## EXPANSION

A roar of delight went up in AFW towers at the announcement of two new teams joining the Hyundai A-League for season 2009/10. Of course, it's great news for the league and all that, but we'll be rinsing the expense account to go to Gold Coast...

THE IMPORTS...  
APART FROM ZURA

Apologies to Newcastle's marquee singing, but this season's imports have been excellent and have justified their inclusion. Just look at Miller, Dadi, Reinaldo, van Dijk and Amaral. The jury's still out on Zura. We didn't say Jardel...

## WAGON WHEELS

They're big, full of chocolate, and loaded with sugar. Just the tonic when putting the mag you hold in your holds together.

## GOALS, GLORIOUS GOALS

The previous two rounds of the Hyundai A-League have been goal-tastic and for that we salute you gods of football. Long may it continue.

## DOWNS

## DEFENDING

Are there loads of goals just because the defending's shoddy? Not totally, and we do want the entertainment to continue, just don't embarrass yourselves defensively, like Newcastle Jets in round three.

## PERTH'S SALIVA

Was Glory's Dino Djubic – aiming his spit at the ref? We're not convinced but the FFA are so a five-match suspension is in place. Either way, player should be careful with their releasing of mouth fluids – we say place buckets around the pitch... Ball boys could put it on eBay, people will buy anything on that site.

## EPL

Crazy money in transfer window signings and managers not allowed to control team affairs – each and every year the EPL shows us as much madness as it does entertainment. Get in touch with reality people.

## JOEL GRIFFITHS' HAIR

Look, we love Joel in the AFW towers, the girls especially. He's a handsome chap and he's a bloody good striker, but Joel, please, what IS going on with you up top?

## SIMON HILL'S GOATEE

Really, Simon, what's going on with it? Shave it off now and reveal your full handsomeness.



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